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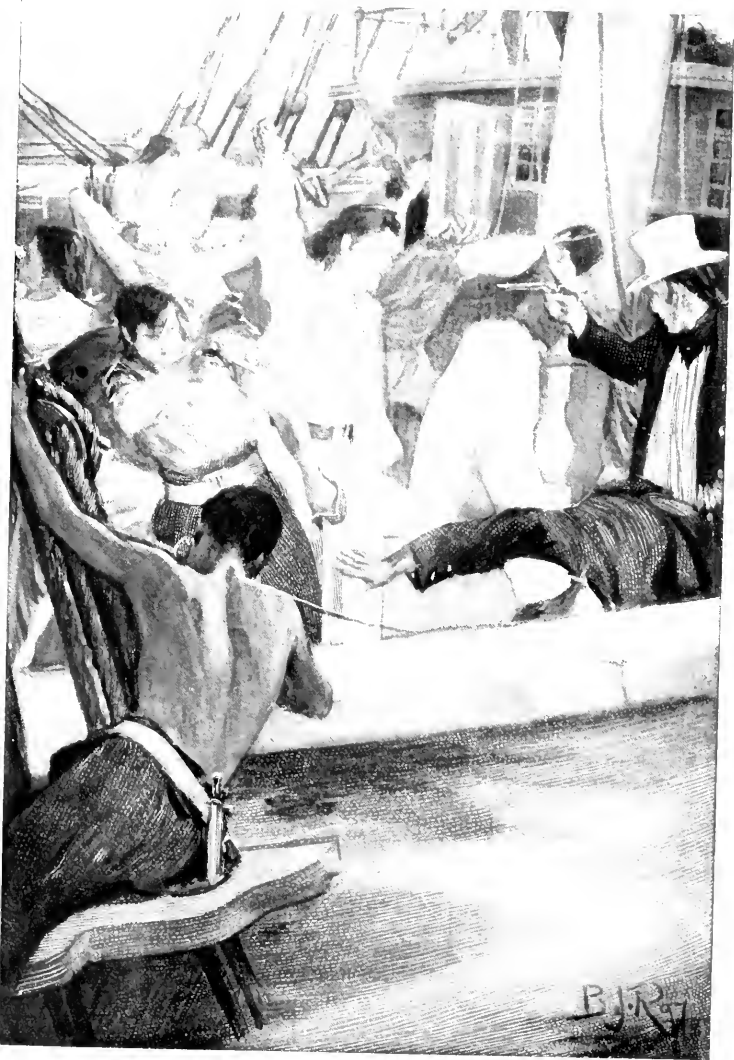








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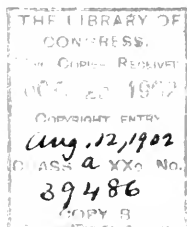
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JOHN S. C. ABBOTT

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New York

1898



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TO  
THE OFFICERS AND SEAMEN OF THE UNITED STATES NAVY

THIS VOLUME,  
COMMEMORATIVE OF THE HEROIC ACHIEVEMENTS OF ONE OF THE MOST  
ILLUSTRIOUS OF THEIR NUMBER, IS RESPECTFULLY

DEDICATED BY

JOHN S. C. ABBOTT.

FAIR HAVEN, CONN., 1874.



# APPENDIX.

SUMMARY OF THE ENTIRE VOYAGE,

COMPILED FROM THE LOG-BOOK.



## PREFACE.

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I COMMENCED writing the Life of Paul Jones with the impression, received from early reading, that he was a reckless adventurer, incapable of fear, and whose chief merit consisted in performing deeds of desperate daring. But I rise from the careful examination of what he has written, said, and done, with the conviction that I had misjudged his character. I now regard him as one of the purest and most enlightened of patriots, and one of the noblest of men. His name should be enrolled upon the same scroll with those of his intimate friends, Washington, Jefferson, Franklin and Lafayette.

As this exhibition of the character of Admiral Jones is somewhat different from that which has been presented in current literature, I have felt the necessity of sustaining the narrative by the most unquestionable documentary evidence. Should any

one, in glancing over the pages, see that the admiral is presented in a different light from that in which he has been accustomed to view him, I must beg him, before he condemns the narrative, to examine the proof which I think establishes every statement.

The admiral had his faults. Who has not? But on the whole he was one of nature's noblemen. His energies were sincerely and intensely devoted to the good of humanity. He was ambitious. But it was a noble ambition, to make his life sublime. He was a man of pure lips and of unblemished life. His chosen friends were the purest, the most exalted, the best of men. He had no low vices. Gambling, drinking, carousing, were abhorrent to his nature. He was a student of science and literature ; and in the most accomplished female society he found his social joy. While forming the comprehensive views of statesmanship and of strategy, and evincing bravery unsurpassed by any knight of romance, he was in manners, thought, and utterance, as unaffected as a child.

JOHN S. C. ABBOTT.

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# PAUL JONES.

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## CHAPTER I.

### *The Early Life of John Paul Jones.*

**His Birth and Childhood.**—Residence and Employments in Scotland.—His Studious Habits.—First Voyage to America.—Engaged in the Slave Trade.—Reasons for Abandoning it.—False Charges against Him.—His Sensitiveness to Obloquy.—Espouses the Cause of the Colonies.—Developments of Character.—Extracts from his Letters.

IN the lonely wilds of Scotland there was, about the middle of the last century, a secluded hamlet called Arbingland. There was a respectable gardener there by the name of John Paul. He had a son born on the 6th of July, 1747, to whom he gave his own name of John. His humble cottage was near the shores of Solway Frith. Young John Paul, like most energetic lads who live within sound of the ocean surge, became impassioned with longings for a sailor's life. When twelve years of age he

was sent across the bay to Whitehaven, in England, then quite an important seaport. Here he was apprenticed to Mr. Younger, who was quite extensively engaged in the American trade.

The daily intercourse of John with the seamen inspired him with a strong desire to visit the New World. He had received a good common-school education, such as Scottish boys generally enjoyed at that time, and was also so eager for intellectual improvement that all his leisure time was given to study. He particularly devoted himself to the acquisition of a thorough knowledge of the theory of navigation. He even studied French. Often at midnight, when many of his companions were at a carouse, he was found absorbed with his books.

When John was thirteen years of age he embarked, as a sailor, on board the ship *Friendship*, bound for the Rappahannock, in Virginia, for a cargo of tobacco. He had an elder brother, William, who had emigrated to this country, and, marrying a Virginia girl, had settled on the banks of the Rappahannock. John had acquired a high reputation at Whitehaven for his correct deportment, his intelligence, and his fidelity in the discharge of every duty. He improved his time so well, while in the employment of Mr. Younger, as to lay the founda-

tion for that eminence, which he could not have obtained but for this education. He could write his own language correctly, and even with considerable force; he was a very respectable French scholar, and there were but few ship-masters who could excel him in the science of navigation.

John Paul was but thirteen years of age when, in the year 1760, he crossed the Atlantic and was cordially welcomed in the humble home of his brother, in one of the most attractive valleys of the world. He was delighted with the entirely new scenes which were here opened before him, and became thoroughly American in his feelings. His first visit was a short one, as he returned with his ship to Whitehaven. Soon after this, Mr. Younger failed in business, and Paul was released from his indentures. Thus the precocious boy, who was already a man in thoughtfulness, energy, and earnestness of purpose, was thrown upon his own resources.

He made several voyages, and at length shipped as third mate on board the ship *King George*, which was bound to the Guinea Coast of Africa, for slaves. Strange as it now appears, the slave trade was then considered an honorable calling. Men of unquestioned piety, who morning and evening kneeled with their happy children around the family altar, fitted out ships to desolate the homes and steal the

children of Africans, and bear them away to life-long slavery. Many a captain, after crowding the hold of his ship with these melancholy victims of his inhumanity, would retire to his cabin, read the precepts of Jesus, "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise," and would then kneel in prayer, imploring God's blessing. And this was not hypocrisy. So strange a being is fallen man.

We have no indications that any compunctions of conscience disturbed John Paul on this voyage. The most illustrious, opulent, and worthy people of England were engaged in the infamous traffic. Of course it was not to be expected that a boy, scarcely emerging from childhood, should develop humanity above that of the generation in the midst of which he was born. The Friendship bore its freight of human victims to the West Indies, where they were sold. He then, when nineteen years of age, shipped at Jamaica, on board the brigantine Two Friends, for Africa, to obtain another cargo of slaves.

It speaks volumes in favor of the intelligence of John Paul, that he became so thoroughly disgusted with the cruelty of the traffic, desolating Africa with the most merciless wars, and tearing husbands from wives, parents from children, that, upon his return to Kingston, he declared that he would have nothing more to do with the traffic forever. His friends



unite in giving their testimony to this his resolve and it is confirmed by the uniform tenor of his subsequent correspondence.

From this his second slaving voyage he embarked for Scotland, as a passenger, on board the brigantine John, under the command of Captain Macadam. On the passage the yellow fever broke out. Both the captain and the mate of the ship died. They were left in the middle of the stormy Atlantic, with none of the crew capable of navigating the ship. Fortunately for all, John Paul assumed the command. The whole crew gratefully recognized his authority. Be it remembered that he had not yet finished his twentieth year. He brought the ship safe into port. The owners, Messrs. Currie, Beck & Co., in recompense of the great service he had rendered them, at once gave him command of a ship both as captain and supercargo. In their employment he sailed for two voyages.

On one of these voyages, Captain Paul was accused of whipping, with undue severity, an insubordinate sailor, by the name of Mungo Maxwell. But a legal investigation absolved him from all blame. The accusation, and the trial which was prolonged through six months, caused Captain Paul great annoyance. The following letter to his mother and sisters reveals his feelings, and much of his

character, at that time. He was then but twenty-five years of age.

“LONDON, 24th September, 1772.

“MY DEAR MOTHER AND SISTERS,

“I only arrived here last night from the Grenadas. I have had but poor health during the voyage. My success in it not having equalled my first sanguine expectations, has added very much to the asperity of my misfortunes, and, I am well assured, was the cause of my loss of health. I am now, however, better, and I trust Providence will soon put me in a way to get bread, and, which is far my greatest happiness, to be serviceable to my poor but much valued friends. I am able to give you no account of my future proceedings, as they depend upon circumstances which are not fully determined.

“I have enclosed to you a copy of an affidavit made before Governor Young, by the Judge of the Court of Vice-Admiralty of Tobago, by which you will see with how little reason my life has been thirsted after, and, which is much dearer to me, my honor, by maliciously loading my fair character with obloquy and vile aspersions. I believe there are few who are hard-hearted enough to think I have not long since given to the world every satisfaction in my power, being conscious of my innocence

before Heaven, who will one day judge even my judges.

"I staked my honor, life, and fortune, for six long months, on the verdict of a British jury, notwithstanding I was sensible of the general prejudice which ran against me. But, after all, none of my accusers had the courage to confront me. Yet I am willing to convince the world, if reason and facts will do it, that they have had no foundation for their harsh treatment.

"I mean to send Mr. Craik a copy, properly proved, as his nice feelings will not, perhaps, be otherwise satisfied. In the mean time, if you please, you can show him that enclosed. His ungracious conduct to me before I left Scotland I have not yet been able to get the better of. Every person of feeling must think meanly of adding to the load of the afflicted. It is true I bore it with seeming unconcern. But heaven can witness for me that I suffered the more on that very account. But enough of this."

The Mr. Craik to whom he here refers was a gentleman of property, in whose employment Mr. Paul's father had formerly been engaged. The whole family were accustomed to look up to him with much reverence. It was perhaps a fault in young Captain Paul that the organ of veneration, as

the phrenologists would say, was not, in him, very fully developed. His knees were not supple in bowing before those who were above him in wealth and rank. Mr. Craik had not fancied the independent boy, and was consequently the more ready to believe the charges which were brought against him.

A rumor reached Mr. Paul, while in the West Indies, that the commercial firm in whose service he was sailing was about to close its operations. This would throw him out of employment. He wrote in the following terms to Mr. Craik, whom as a family friend and patron he highly respected. This letter was written a year before the charge for the maltreatment of Mungo Maxwell was brought against him. It was as follows:

“ST. GEORGE, GRENADA, 5th August, 1770

“SIR,

“Common report here says that my owners are going to finish their connections in the West Indies as fast as possible. How far this is true I shall not pretend to judge. But should that really prove to be the case, you know the disadvantage I must labor under.

“These, however, would not have been the case had I been acquainted with the matter sooner, as, in

that case, I believe I could have made interest with some gentlemen here to have been concerned with me in a large ship out of London. And as these gentlemen have estates in this and the adjacent islands, I should have been able to make two voyages every year, and should always have had a full ship out and home.

“ However, I by no means repine, as it is a maxim with me to do my best and leave the rest to Providence. I shall take no step whatever without your knowledge and approbation. I have had several very severe fevers lately, which have reduced me a good deal, though I am now perfectly recovered. I must beg you to supply my mother, should she want anything, as I well know your readiness. I hope yourself and family enjoy health and happiness.

“ I am, most sincerely, sir, yours always,

“ JOHN PAUL.”

In 1773, John Paul's brother died, in Virginia. He died childless, and left no will. John repaired to his brother's former residence to settle the estate. Here, for some reason which has never been satisfactorily explained, he assumed the surname of Jones, so that he ever afterward became familiarly known as Paul Jones. His subsequent achievements became such, that probably that name will never be

obliterated from the memories of men. He had acquired considerable property, which he intrusted to agents at Tobago, and it was all lost.

Captain Jones, weary of the wandering life of a sailor and its unsatisfactory results, was now disposed to devote his days to the peaceful pursuits of agriculture and to study, for which he had very strong predilections. In his letters to his friends he often expressed his desire to enter upon a life of "calm contemplation and poetic ease." Man proposes, God disposes. The tumultuous career into which he was led, was not one which he would have sought for himself. He was almost forced into it by the state of the times.

When in the midst of the stormiest scenes, without a family and without a home, he wrote pensively to the Countess of Selkirk, that duty to his country had compelled him "to sacrifice not only his favorite scheme of life, but the softer affections of his heart, and his hopes of domestic happiness." His letters all indicate that he was a thoughtful man, one who deeply pondered the mystery of this our earthly being, and who made frank acknowledgment of his moral and religious obligations.

His favorite poet was Thomson; and his "Seasons" he read and re-read. It is not possible that any man of frivolous nature should develop a taste

so serious and so elevating. The loss of all his property at Tobago disheartened him, and repelled him from the risks of a commercial life. This probably decided him to settle down as a planter in Virginia, and to remain satisfied with the humble competence of a cultivator of the soil, in a rural home. He wrote to the Hon. Robert Morris :

“I conclude that Mr. Hewes has acquainted you with a very great misfortune which befell me some years ago, and which brought me into North America. I am under no concern whatever, that this, or any other past circumstance of my life, will sink me in your opinion. Since human wisdom cannot secure us from accidents, it is the greatest effort of human wisdom to bear them well.”

From the age of thirteen, America had been the country of his adoption. Increasing years but added to his attachment to the principles of liberty which were being developed here. His innate mental constitution revolted from the feudal subserviency which a haughty aristocracy exacted in Europe. When the struggle was commencing between the mother country and these her infant colonies, Mr. Jones, with all the ardor of his nature, espoused the colonial cause. He then occupied the position of a Virginia gentleman, highly respected for his character and his endowments. The rank of those with whom he was in

correspondence indicates his social position. He was not a friendless adventurer, but an intelligent patriot, whose influence was constantly increasing through the sound judgment, the courage, and the spirit of self-sacrifice he was ever exhibiting.

He often expressed deep regret for the painful necessity which compelled him to take up arms against the Government of his native land. But he was struggling for the maintenance of his own rights, and those of his fellow-countrymen, goaded to resist unendurable tyranny. In a letter which he wrote to Baron Vander Capellan, then Dutch minister at the Hague, he says :

“I was indeed born in Britain ; but I do not inherit the degenerate spirit of that fallen nation, which I at once lament and despise. It is far beneath me to reply to their hireling invectives. They are strangers to the envied approbation that greatly animates and rewards the man who draws his sword only in support of the dignity of freedom. America has been the country of my fond election from the age of thirteen, when I first saw it. I had the honor to hoist, with my own hands, the flag of freedom, the first time it was displayed on the Delaware, and I have attended it with veneration ever since on the ocean.”

When the war of the Revolution, in 1775, com-



menced, England had a thousand war-vessels. The colonies had not one. Congress equipped a naval force of five vessels to resist the most powerful naval armament this world has ever known. Paul Jones was appointed first lieutenant of one of these, the ship Alfred. He owed this appointment to the Hon. Joseph Hewes, a member of Congress, and a signer of the Declaration of Independence, who chanced to be acquainted with the rare qualifications of Mr. Jones for the position. Captain Saltonstall commanded the Alfred.

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On the 14th of November, 1776, the Alfred, a frigate of 44 guns was lying at anchor off Chestnut Street wharf, in Philadelphia. We had then no national banner. As the commander came on board, Lieutenant John Paul Jones, with his own hands, raised the first American naval flag, under a salute of thirteen guns. This flag, it is said, then consisted of thirteen stripes, emblematic of the thirteen colonies, and a pine-tree with a rattlesnake coiled at the roots, as if about to spring. Underneath was the motto, "Don't Tread upon Me." In commemoration of this event, Miss Sherburne wrote an ode, from which we quote two stanzas :

" 'Twas Jones, Paul Jones, who first o'er Delaware's tide  
From *Alfred's* main displayed Columbia's pride ;  
The stripes of freedom proudly waved on high,  
While shouts of freedom rang for liberty.

"Through England's fleets thou dashed in bold array,  
On Albion's coast spread terror and dismay;  
Thy cannons' thunder shook her rock-bound shore,  
Her Lion trembled midst his boastful roar

The little squadron, consisting of the ships **Alfred** and **Columbus**, the brigantines **Andrew Doria** and **Cabot**, and the sloop **Providence**, sailed from the Bay of Delaware on the 17th of February, 1776, to make a descent on the British Island of New Providence, to seize a quantity of military stores which were deposited in the forts there. The squadron was armed in all with one hundred guns and about one thousand men. **Ezekiel Hopkins** was commander-in-chief of the fleet. The fleet was not ready to sail until the middle of February. Struggling through vast masses of ice, the vessels passed **Cape Henlopen** on the 17th of the month.

In this important enterprise **John Paul Jones** was only a lieutenant. But it should be remarked that there were three grades of lieutenant, and that he was placed at the head of the first grade. He was offered a captain's commission, to take command of the **Providence**, which carried twelve guns and one hundred and fifty men. Modestly this extraordinary man declined the responsible position, not deeming himself fully qualified to fill it. Subsequently, in a letter to the **Hon. Robert Morris**, he wrote :

“When I came to try my skill I am not ashamed to own that I did not find myself perfect in the duties of a first lieutenant. However, I by no means admit that any one of the gentlemen who so earnestly sought after rank and the command, was, at the beginning, able to teach me any part of the duty of a sea-officer. Since that time it is well known there has been no comparison between their *means* of acquiring military marine knowledge and mine. If midnight study and the instruction of the greatest and most learned sea-officers can have given me *advantages*, I am not without them. I confess, however, I am yet to learn. It is the work of many years’ study and experience to acquire the high degree of science necessary for a great sea-officer. Cruising after merchant-ships, the service on which our frigates have generally been employed, affords, I may say, no part of the knowledge necessary for conducting fleets and their operations. There is now perhaps as much difference between a single battle between two ships, and an engagement between two fleets, as there is between a single duel and a ranged battle between two armies.”

While the fleet was fitting and manning, Lieutenant Jones had superintended all the affairs on board the Alfred. It was not until a day or two before the squadron sailed that Captain Saltonstall appeared and

took the command. On the 4th of March the squadron anchored at Abaco, one of the Bahama Islands, about one hundred miles north from New Providence. On the passage they had captured two small sloops from New Providence. They learned from the crew of these vessels, that the forts were not strongly garrisoned, and that they contained large magazines of all military stores.

The commander was not skilful either as a seaman or a soldier. Through mismanagement the enterprise came near proving a total failure. Jones was born to command. Without any effort on his part, his superior mind and knowledge naturally assumed ascendancy. Seeing that all things were going wrong, he suggested sailing round to the west of the island, landing the marines about nine miles from the fort, and then, by a rapid march, to make the assault. Mr. Jones promised himself to pilot the vessels to a safe anchorage. With some reluctance Captain Saltonstall gave his assent. Jones took the pilot with him to the foretopmast-head. From that point they could see every reef and rock, and trace out the channel. The marines landed under cover of the guns. There was no force sufficient to oppose them. Captain Saltonstall, by his injudicious movements, had given ample warning of his approach, so that the gover time, during the

night, to load two sloops with ammunition and send them away. This might easily have been prevented by ordering the two brigantines to lie off the bar.

The island was surrendered by the governor. The guns, and all the governmental property in the forts, were embarked on board the vessels. All private property was sacredly respected. And this was done when the officers of the English Government were laying our villages in ashes, and hounding on the savages to assail our defenceless frontier with the torch and the tomahawk. The governor and two other military men were brought off as prisoners.

On the return with this booty, of such almost inestimable value to the struggling colonies, the fleet captured two vessels without a struggle, the Hawke, a schooner of six guns, and the brig Bolton, of eight guns. The fleet encountered off Block Island, at the head of Long Island Sound, an English frigate, the Glasgow, of 24 guns. The Alfred mounted 30 guns, the Columbus 28. Had there been any skill in military seamanship displayed, the Glasgow could not have escaped this force. The sea was perfectly smooth. Lieutenant Jones was placed between decks to serve the first battery. He could have no voice in the direction of the battle. Whenever his guns could be brought to bear upon the enemy he served them well. Captain Saltonstall, in his officia

■

report, testified to his fidelity in duty. The Glasgow escaped. This was our first naval battle. It reflected no credit upon our infant marine. Lieutenant Jones and the whole nation were deeply chagrined by the disgrace of that night. Repressing merited condemnation, he mildly wrote, "It is for the commander-in-chief and the captains to answer for the escape of the Glasgow."

Two days after the inglorious action the squadron entered the harbor of New London. A court-martial was held to investigate the affair. The account which Lieutenant Jones gave of the engagement, in the log-book of the Alfred, shows a generous and magnanimous mind.

"At 2 A. M. cleared ship for action. At half-past two, the Cabot, being between us and the enemy, began to engage, and soon after we did the same. At the third glass the enemy bore away, and, by crowding sail, at length got a considerable way ahead, and made signals for the rest of the English fleet, at Rhode Island, to come to her assistance, and steered directly for the harbor.

"The commodore then thought it imprudent to risk our prizes, by pursuing farther. Therefore to prevent our being decoyed into their hands, at half-past six made the signal to leave off chase and haul by the wind to join our prizes. The Cabot was

disabled at the second broadside; the captain being dangerously wounded, the master and several men killed. The enemy's whole fire was then directed at us. An unlucky shot having carried away our wheel-block and ropes, the ship broached to, and gave the enemy an opportunity of raking us with several broadsides before we were again in condition to steer the ship and return the fire.

“In the action we received several shots under water, which made the ship very leaky. We had, besides, the mainmast shot through, and the upper works and rigging very considerably damaged. Yet it is surprising that we only lost the second lieutenant of marines and four men. We had no more than three men dangerously, and four slightly wounded.”

The skill with which the guns of the *Alfred* were served may be inferred from the fact, that a passenger on board the *Glasgow* testified that her hull was seriously damaged; that ten shot passed through her mainmast, fifty-two through her mizzen staysail, one hundred and ten through her mainsail, and eighty-eight through her foresail. She had many spars carried away, and her rigging was badly cut to pieces.

This our first naval battle was fought so near the Rhode Island shore, that the report of the guns was heard, and even the flashes were seen by those on

the land. The Continental Gazette of May 29, 1776, gives the following quaint account of the conflict, from one who listened to the thunders booming over the waves.

“For several hours before and during the engagement, a vast number of cannon were heard from the southeast. About sunrise eight or ten sail of ships and brigs were seen a little to the eastward of Block Island. Indeed, the flashes of the cannon were seen by some people about daybreak. These things caused much speculation. But in a few hours the mystery was somewhat cleared up; for away came the poor Glasgow, under all the sail she could set, yelping from the mouths of her cannon like a broken-legged dog, as a signal of her being sadly wounded. And though she settled away, and handed most of her sails just before she came into the harbor, it was plainly perceived, by the holes in those she had standing, and by the hanging of her yards, that she had been treated in a very rough manner.”

Though Lieutenant Jones could not be blind to the want of nautical skill displayed in allowing the Glasgow to escape, he did not doubt that the commodore had done the best he could. Not a word of demur escaped his lips. In a letter to Hon. Mr. Hewes, he wrote :

“I have the pleasure of assuring you that the



commander-in-chief is respected through the fleet. I verily believe that the officers, and men in general, would go any length to execute his orders."

Another passage in the same letter throws such light upon the well-balanced and noble character of Lieutenant Jones that I cannot refrain from quoting it. He writes :

"It is certainly for the interests of the service that a cordial interchange of civilities should subsist between superior and inferior officers. Therefore it is bad policy in superiors to behave toward their inferiors as though they were of a lower species. Men of liberal minds, who have long been accustomed to command, can ill brook being thus set at naught by others who pretend to claim the monopoly of sense. The rude, ungentle treatment which they experience, creates such heart-burnings as are nowise consonant with that cheerful ardor and spirit which ought ever to be a characteristic of an officer. Therefore, whoever thinks himself hearty in the service, is widely mistaken when he adopts such a line of conduct in order to prove it. To be well obeyed it is necessary to be esteemed."

Two courts-martial were held on board the *Alfred*. The captain of the *Providence* was dismissed from service. Lieutenant Jones was promoted to the captaincy of that sloop. The little

fleet, having received a reinforcement of two hundred men, sailed from Providence, Rhode Island. The vessels having been refitted, it was necessary to enlist more men before any important enterprise could be undertaken. As most of the seamen had enlisted in the army, it was found very difficult to obtain men fit for naval service.

On the 18th of May, Captain Jones, after a passage of thirty-six hours, arrived in New York, where he devoted his time to shipping mariners. He was greatly interested in everything relating to the creation of a navy for the new nation of the United States, just entering into being. He wrote to Hon. Mr. Hewes :

“ In my opinion a commander in the navy ought to be a man of strong and well-connected sense ; a gentleman, as well as a seaman in theory and in practice. Want of learning, and rude, ungentle manners, are by no means characteristic of an officer.”

Captain Jones, having at length obtained the number of men required, in obedience to orders sailed for New London, where he took from the hospital all the seamen who had been left there sick but who had recovered, and sailed for Providence, Rhode Island. Scarcely had he arrived there when he received orders from the commander-in-chief to come immediately down Narragansett Bay, to

attack an English sloop-of-war, then in sight. He obeyed with alacrity. But the sloop had disappeared before he reached Newport. He was then ordered to Newburyport, to convoy a vessel with a cargo of cannon to New York, and then, returning, to convoy some vessels from Stonington to Newport.

It will be remembered that England then had a fleet of a thousand sail; superior, probably, to all the combined navies of the globe. This was the naval power we were to resist with our poor little squadron of five vessels, mounting in all but one hundred guns. The majestic frigates of the enemy blockaded almost every harbor in the colonies. There were several of these cruising at the eastern entrance of Long Island Sound, to cut off all naval intercourse between the colonies of the Middle and those of the Eastern States.

## CHAPTER II.

### *The Infant Navy.*

**Rescuing the Brigantine.**—Commissioned as Captain.—**Escape from the Solway.**—Conflict with the *Milford*.—Adventures at *Canso* and *Madame*.—Return with Prizes.—Expedition to Cape Breton.—Wise Counsel of Jones.—Brilliant Naval Campaign.—Saving the Prizes.—Value of the *Mellish*.—Mission to France.—Disappointment.—Sails with the *Ranger*.

CAPTAIN JONES found all his intelligence, bravery and nautical skill tested to the utmost, in evading, thwarting, and struggling against the British men-of-war swarming around him. He had several very fierce rencontres with forces superior to his own. One day he saw a foreign vessel (I think it was Spanish), coming from St. Domingo, with a cargo of military stores for the colonies. This brigantine was hotly pursued by the *Cerberus*, a British man-of-war. The thunders of her bow-guns echoed over the waves, while the balls of solid shot, ricochetting for more than a mile, proclaimed how terrible the bolts which those thunders sent forth.

The courage and nautical skill of Captain Jones rescued the brigantine and her precious cargo. The

vessel was afterward purchased by Congress, and named the Hampden. He was then ordered to Boston, whence he convoyed some merchant vessels to Philadelphia. This was indeed an arduous and perilous mission. The war-ships of the enemy were daily arriving off Sandy Hook, under the guidance of Lord Howe. Captain Jones caught sight of several of these ships, which, with a single broadside, could have sunk him. But he had the address to avoid them. On the 8th of August, 1776, he received from John Hancock, President of Congress, his commission as captain. It contained the following words :

“ JOHN PAUL JONES, ESQ.

“ We, reposing especial trust and confidence in your patriotism, valor, conduct, and fidelity, do, by these presents, constitute and appoint you to be captain in the navy of the United States, fitted out for the defence of American liberty, and for repelling every hostile invasion thereof. You are therefore carefully and diligently to discharge the duty of captain, by doing and performing all manner of things thereunto belonging. And we do strictly charge and require all officers, marines, and seamen, under your command, to be obedient to your orders as captain.”

He then received orders to set out on a **cruise** of two or three months against the navy of Great Britain. For this enterprise he was furnished with the sloop Providence, which mounted twelve guns, and was manned by but seventy sailors. He was left entirely to his own discretion, not being confined to any particular station or service. Captain Jones sailed from Philadelphia, on this chivalric expedition, the latter part of August, 1776. Not far from the Island of Bermuda he encountered a British frigate, the Solway.

It was like the fox meeting the hound. The only safety was in flight. A chase took place, with a constant interchange of shot. This running fight continued for six hours. Those who are familiar with nautical affairs, will understand the bold measure by which he escaped. He gradually edged away until he brought his heavy adversary upon his weather quarter. Then, putting his helm suddenly up, he stood dead before the wind. At the same moment he threw out all his light sails, with which his little sloop was abundantly furnished. This **manœuvre** compelled him to pass within pistol-shot of his pursuer. But he knew that he could sail much faster than the frigate, before the wind.

The captain of the Solway was quite unprepared for such a **manœuvre**. Before he could change his

course to imitate it, the Providence had gained such a start as to be soon beyond the reach of the Solway's guns. Triumphantly the little sloop swept the waves until the discomfited frigate gave up the chase.

Not long after this, as Captain Jones was lying to, on the banks near the Isle of Sables, to allow his men to fish, another large English frigate hove in sight, which proved to be the Milford. Though he had much confidence in the speed of his light little sloop, which, under her cloud of canvas, could almost like a bubble skim the wave, he prudently tried her speed with that of the gigantic foe approaching. Finding that he could easily outstrip her, he tauntingly allowed the Milford to approach to nearly within gun-shot. He then spread his sails, keeping just out of harm's way.

The frigate rounded to and discharged her broadside. The shot skipped over the waves and sank at some distance before reaching the sloop. After each broadside, Captain Jones, in token of his contempt, ordered his marine officer to return the fire, by the discharge of a single musket. He kept up this burlesque of a battle, causing the frigate to throw away her ammunition, from ten o'clock in the morning till sunset. He then spread all sail and went unharmed on his way.

The next morning he entered the Gut of Canso which separates the Island of Cape Breton from the mainland. He found three English schooners in the harbor of Canso. He burned one, and sunk another, after having filled the third, a schooner, the *Ebenezer*, with what fish had been found in the other two. Here he learned that at the Island of Madame, near by, on the east side of the Bay of Canso, there were nine British vessels, consisting of brigs, ships, and schooners. He sent boats, well armed, to destroy them, while he kept off and on with his sloop, ready to punish severely any attempt to rescue the shipping.

The enterprise was entirely successful, and, as no opposition was made, it was bloodless. These vessels had transferred their cargoes to the shore, and were unrigged. It would take some time to fit them for sea. Despatch was of the utmost importance. Captain Jones humanely, and very wisely, informed the crews of these vessels, that if they would cordially assist him in rigging and fitting out such vessels as he required, he would leave them vessels sufficient to cross the Atlantic to their own homes.

Though the British officers were generally very bitter in their hostility to the colonial cause, it was not so with the masses of the English people. There



was in their hearts an underlying feeling of sympathy with the brave colonists who were struggling against intolerable oppression. These English sailors, therefore, heartily joined their American brothers, and assisted, with the utmost energy, until the business was accomplished.

On the evening of September 25th, a violent tempest arose, with deluging rain. Captain Jones was compelled to cast anchor at the entrance of the harbor, where, with both his anchors and whole cables ahead, he with difficulty rode out the storm. One of the prize ships, the *Alexander*, which was just ready for sea, anchored under the shelter of a projecting point of rocks, and thus narrowly escaped destruction. Another of the prizes, a schooner, called the *Sea-Flower*, with a valuable cargo, was torn from her moorings and driven ashore, a total wreck. As she could not be got off the next day, she was set on fire. The schooner *Ebenezer*, which he had brought from Canso, laden with fish, was driven on a reef of sunken rocks, and totally lost. With great difficulty the crew saved themselves on a raft.

Toward noon of the 26th this fierce gale began to abate. The British ship *Adventure* he burned in the harbor. He then put to sea, taking with him

three heavily laden prizes, the ship *Alexander*, and the brigantines *Kingston* and *Success*.

The fishery at Canso and Madame he thus effectually destroyed. He left behind him two small schooners and one brig, to convey the British seamen, about three hundred in number, back to their homes. He said, "Had I not done this, I should have stood chargeable with inhumanity."

This bold enterprise was indeed bearding the lion in his den. It woke up the British Government to a new sense of the vigor of that worm which it supposed was squirming helplessly beneath its feet. It taught the proud Court of St. James that in war there were blows to be received as well as blows to be given. These acts seem cruel. But "war," says General Sherman, "is cruelty. You cannot refine it."

While England was wantonly laying our villages in ashes, and driving women and children in homelessness and starvation into the fields, Captain Jones spared all private property on the land. He only seized or consigned to destruction that private property *afloat*, which the code of war England herself had established, pronounced to be lawful booty. England, proud mistress of the seas, supposed that she, with her invincible navy, could plunder the commerce of all nations, and that she had nothing to

fear in the way of retaliation. It must have been to her indeed a surprise to find the shipping in her own harbors plundered and blazing.

Captain Jones felt the necessity of the utmost possible expedition. He had learned that there was an English war-brig, of powerful armament, within forty-five miles of him to the southward. This formidable antagonist might, at any hour, loom in sight. As the little fleet was crowding along under full sail making all haste, on the morning of the 27th, two sails were discerned in the distant horizon. There could be no doubt that they were English vessels. Perilous as Captain Jones's situation was, he could not resist the temptation to give them chase.

He therefore signalled his prizes to rendezvous on the southwest part of the Isle of Sables, and wait for him there three days, should he not sooner appear. He then spread all sail in pursuit of the strangers. They also spread every inch of canvas they could command, and before they could be overtaken ran into the harbor of Louisbourg. There was reason to suppose that there were several British men-of-war there. Captain Jones therefore returned to his prizes at the rendezvous, and again all pressed forward on their homeward voyage.

In this cruise, which lasted but six weeks and

five days, Captain Jones captured sixteen prizes, besides the vessels which he destroyed in the harbors of Canso and Madame. Of these prizes, eight he manned and sent into port. The remainder were burned. Captain Jones returned to Newport, Rhode Island, where the commander-in-chief of our little navy had established his headquarters.

The British officers were treating the captives they had taken from the Americans, with the greatest brutality. They had driven one hundred prisoners into the coal mines of Cape Breton, where they were forced to labor like slaves. This procedure greatly outraged Captain Jones's sense of humanity and justice. He suggested that an expedition should be fitted out for their release; and also, as far as possible, to destroy England's coal fleet and her fishing fleet. The plan was approved of. For the accomplishment of this important enterprise he was allowed to fit out two vessels, the *Alfred* and the *Providence*. The whole burden and responsibility of the preparations rested upon him. He took command of the *Alfred*, committing the *Providence* to Captain Hacker. He found but thirty men on board the *Alfred*, and with great difficulty succeeded in enlisting thirty more. When the *Alfred* entered the harbor at Newport from Philadelphia, a few weeks before, she had two hundred and thirty-five

men on her muster-roll. Captain Jones, in a letter to Hon. Robert Morris, explained the cause of this singular desertion, and proposed a remedy.

"It seems to me," he writes, "that the privateers entice the men away as fast as they receive their month's pay. It is to the last degree distressing to contemplate the state and establishment of our navy. The common class of mankind are animated by no nobler principle than that of self-interest. This, and this alone, determines all adventurers in privateers; the owners, as well as those whom they employ.

"And while this is the case, unless the private emolument of individuals *in our navy* is made superior to that in *privateers*, it never can become respectable; it never will become formidable. And without a respectable navy, alas, America! In the present critical situation of affairs, human wisdom can suggest no more than one infallible expedient: enlist the seamen during pleasure, *and give them all the prizes.*

"What is the paltry emolument of two-thirds of prizes to this vast continent.\* If so poor a resource is essential to its independency, we are, in sober sadness, involved in a woful predicament, and our

\* Congress appropriated two-thirds of all prizes to the Government, leaving but one-third to be divided among the captors.

ruin is fast approaching. The situation of America is new in the annals of mankind. Her affairs cry haste; and speed must answer them. Trifles therefore ought to be wholly disregarded, as being, in the old vulgar proverb, 'penny wise and pound foolish.'

"If our enemies, with the best established and most formidable navy in the universe, have found it expedient to assign all prizes to the captors, how much more is such policy essential to our infant fleet? But I need use no arguments to convince you of the necessity of making our navy equal, if not superior to theirs."

Our navy was so small and our impoverishment so great that Congress could furnish Captain Jones with but two vessels for his important expedition to Cape Breton. The Alfred and the Providence sailed together from Newport harbor, on the 2d of November, 1776. This was so late in the season, to embark for those high latitudes, that Captain Jones, discouraged by the delays which had been encountered, was not very sanguine as to the success of the expedition.

The first night he cast anchor at Tarpauling Cove, near Nantucket. Here he found a privateer belonging to Rhode Island, inward bound. He was in great want of men. Many sailors, for reasons which we have already given, had deserted the regu-

lar service to enlist on board the privateers. Captain Jones sent his boat on board the privateer to search for deserters from the navy. Four men were found, carefully concealed. They were taken on board the Alfred. This led to a law-suit, which subsequently subjected Captain Jones to considerable trouble. Louisbourg, on the eastern coast of the Island of Cape Breton, had a commodious harbor, and was then a seaport of considerable importance. Just off the harbor Captain Jones fortunately encountered an English brig, the Mellish, partially armed, and laden with a large amount of clothing, thick and warm, for the British troops in Canada. The brig made a little resistance, but was speedily captured, with all her precious cargo. Soon after this he captured a large fishing-vessel, which quite replenished his meagre store of provisions.

The next day a violent snow-storm darkened the air, with a severe gale blowing from the northwest. Captain Hacker, in command of the Providence, either frightened by the inclement weather or treasonably disposed, took advantage of the darkness of the ensuing night to bear away south, and return to Newport. The Alfred was thus left alone to prosecute the now impossible enterprise.

Captain Jones sent his two prizes, the brig Mellish and the fishing-vessel, to steer for any American

port which could be reached. The fishing-vessel was recaptured by the English. But the **Mellish** was successfully carried into the harbor of Dartmouth Massachusetts. The clothing, with which she was lader, proved to be of incalculable use to the army of Washington. The Continental troops, thinly clad, had been suffering severely from the freezing blasts of winter.

In the midst of smothering snow-storms and fierce gales, Captain Jones again entered the harbor of Canso. A large English transport, laden with provisions, was aground, near the entrance to the harbor. He sent his boats to apply the torch. The whole fabric, with all its contents, soon vanished in flame and smoke. A large oil warehouse, containing a large quantity of material for the whale and cod fishery, was also consigned to consuming fire. He then continued his voyage along the eastern coast of Cape Breton.

In a dense fog, not far from Louisbourg, he fell in with quite a fleet of coal vessels, from the crown mines in Sydney, under convoy of the English frigate **Flora**. Favored by the fog, and unseen by the frigate, he captured three of the largest of these vessels. Two days after this he encountered a **British** privateer from Liverpool, which he took, after but a slight conflict. Thick masses of ice filled the harbor



adjacent to the coal mines. He had one hundred and fifty prisoners on board the *Alfred*. His water-casks were nearly empty, and his provisions mostly consumed. Five prize vessels were in his train. It was clearly his duty to convoy them, as soon as possible, into some safe port. He therefore commenced his return.

The little fleet kept together, guarded by the *Alfred*, and the Liverpool privateer, which, being armed for battle, Captain Jones had manned and given into the charge of Lieutenant Saunders. Just on the edge of St. George's Bank, the British frigate *Milford* was again encountered. It was late in the afternoon when her topsails first appeared above the horizon. All the vessels of Captain Jones's fleet were on the starboard tack. It was evident that, as the wind was then, the *Milford* could not overtake them before night, which was close at hand. He signalled his vessels to crowd with all sail, on the same tack, through the night, without paying any regard to the lights which he might show.

After dark both he and the captured privateer tacked, and thus entered upon a different course from that of the rest of the fleet. To decoy the frigate to follow him, and thus draw it away from the prizes, he carried toplights until the morning. The *Milford* gave him hot chase. When the morn-

ing light dawned upon the ocean the prizes were n where to be seen. The stratagem had thus f proved eminently successful. All that now remain- ed for Captain Jones was to make his own escape with the Alfred, and the privateer under Lieutenant Saunders. The privateer, through mismanagement, was overtaken and captured. A terrible storm which had been for some time brewing, in the after noon lashed the ocean, and amid clouds and dark- ness and foaming surges the Alfred made her es- cape.

On the 15th of December, 1776, Captain Jones entered the harbor of Boston. He had then, or board the Alfred, provisions and water barely suffi- cient for two days. To his great gratification he found that his prizes had all safely reached port. The welcome news of the capture of the cargo of clothing, in the Mellish, reached Washington just before he recrossed the Delaware and captured the British garrison at Trenton. Captain Jones, in his letter to the Marine Committee, writes .

“ This prize is, I believe, the most valuable which has been taken by the American arms. She made some defence, but it was trifling. The loss will dis- tress the enemy more than can be easily imagined, as the clothing on board of her is the last intended to be sent out for Canada this season, and what has

preceded it is already taken. The situation of Burgoyne's army must soon become insupportable.'

Captain Jones was so impressed with the importance of this capture that he had resolved, at every hazard, to sink the vessel rather than permit it again to fall into the hands of the enemy. He was delayed some time in Boston in disposing of his prizes and in getting rid of his prisoners, or, as he phrases it, of being delivered of the "honorable office of a jail-keeper."

He passed the winter in Boston, consecrating all his energies to the creation of a navy worthy of the rising republic. Though his feelings were deeply wounded, and his sense of justice greatly outraged, by being, for political reasons, superseded in command by men who were totally unqualified for naval office, and who had never yet served, he did not allow these considerations, though he remonstrated indignantly against the unjust acts, to abate, in the slightest degree, his patriotic zeal. The suggestions he made the Marine Committee have so commended themselves to the judgment of those in command that nearly all of them have been gradually adopted. A few extracts from these long communications will reflect much light upon the character of this remarkable man.

"None other," he writes, "than a gentleman, as

well as a seaman in theory and practice, is qualified to support the character of an officer in the navy. Nor is any man fit to command a ship of war, who is not capable of communicating his ideas on paper, in language that becomes his rank."

Again he writes, in reference to the great injustice which he had experienced, " When I entered into the service I was not actuated by motives of self-interest. I stepped forth as a free citizen of the world, in defence of the violated rights of mankind, and not in search of riches, whereof, I thank God, I inherit a sufficiency. But I should prove my degeneracy were I not, in the highest degree, tenacious of my rank and seniority. As a gentleman I can yield this point only to persons of superior abilities and merit. Under such persons it would be my highest ambition to learn."

Again he wrote to Hon. Mr. Morris: " As the regulations of the navy are of the utmost consequence, you will not think it presumption if, with the utmost diffidence, I venture to communicate to you such hints as, in my judgment, will promote its honor and good government. I could heartily wish that every commissioned officer was to be previously examined. To my certain knowledge there are persons who have already crept into commission, without

abilities or fit qualification. I am, myself, far from desiring to be excused."

After a toilsome winter of many annoyances he repaired early in April, 1777, to Philadelphia, then the seat of the Colonial Government. Prominent members of Congress, when their attention was called to the subject, admitted that Captain Jones had been wrongfully treated. Mr. Hancock, President of Congress, assured him that the injustice of superseding him was not intentional, but was the result of a multiplicity of business. He said to him:

"The injustice of that regulation shall make but a nominal and temporary difference. In the mean time you may be assured that no navy officer stands higher in the opinion of Congress. The matter of rank shall, as soon as possible, be arranged. In the mean time you shall have a separate command, until better provision can be made for you."

Captain Jones urged that there should be a parity of rank between the officers of the navy and the army. He proposed that, in accordance with the British establishment, which was certainly the best regulated navy in the world, an admiral should rank with a general, a vice-admiral with a lieutenant-general, a rear-admiral with a major-general, a commodore with a brigadier-general, a captain with a colonel, a master and commander with a lieutenant-

colonel, a lieutenant commanding with a major, and a lieutenant in the navy with a captain of horse, foot, or marines.

He also urged strenuously, as an object demanding immediate attention, that commissioners of dock yards should be established to superintend the building and outfit of all ships of war. They were to be invested with power to appoint deputies, and to provide and keep in constant readiness all naval stores. It speaks well for the intelligence and sound judgment of Captain Jones that, though he was a young officer of but one year's standing, nearly every suggestion he made was subsequently adopted.

Soon after this he received an appointment from the Marine Committee, to sail from Portsmouth, New Hampshire, in the French ship *Amphitrite*, to France, with a letter to the American Commissioners there, ordering them to purchase as fine a ship as could be obtained in Europe, for Captain Jones. He was to take out a crew with him, to man the ship, from Portsmouth. The letter the Marine Committee wrote to the Commissioners was very urgent, calling upon them to strain every nerve to accomplish the end as soon as possible.

"We hope," they wrote, "you may not delay this business one moment; but purchase, in such port or place in Europe as it can be done with most

convenience and despatch, a fine fast-sailing frigate or larger ship. You must make it a point not to disappoint Captain Jones's wishes and expectations on this occasion."

On the 14th of June, 1777, Congress established the national flag. It was voted "that the flag of the United States should be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the Union be thirteen stars, white, in a blue field, representing a new constellation."

The French commander of the *Amphitrite*, notwithstanding the sympathies of France were then so cordially with the colonies, very reasonably objected to taking a step so decidedly belligerent as to transport a crew to France, to engage in direct hostilities against English commerce. The plan therefore had to be abandoned. England and France were then at peace. Soon, however, war commenced between them.

Congress then appointed Jones to the command of the ship *Ranger*, which had recently been built in Portsmouth. He was placed in command of this our first frigate, on the same day when Congress designated the Stars and the Stripes as our national flag. Consequently Paul Jones, who first unfurled the banner of the Pine Tree, over the little sloop *Providence*, now enjoyed the distinguished honor of being the

first to spread to the breeze that beautiful banner the Stars and the Stripes, now renowned throughout the world, and around whose folds more than forty millions of freemen are ever ready, with enthusiasm, to rally.

The Ranger was not prepared for sea until the middle of October. The ship mounted but eighteen guns, though originally intended for twenty-six. She sailed from Portsmouth, New Hampshire, on the 1st of November, 1777, and, after a month's voyage, entered the harbor of Nantes on the 2d of December. This noble city, situated on the river Loire, about thirty-four miles from its mouth, and two hundred miles from Paris, was then one of the most important seaports in France. Ships of two hundred tons burden could cast anchor in the broad, clear, deep river. An immense amount of shipping crowded her quays, one of which was a mile and a half in length.

On the voyage, soon after passing the Western Islands, he encountered many vessels, but none which proved to be English, until he was approaching the Channel. He then overtook a fleet of ten British vessels, under a strong convoy. Captain Jones exerted all his nautical skill to detach some of these from the convoy, but was unable to succeed. He, however, soon captured two brigantines, or small



brigs, laden with fruit from Malaga, bound to London. Both of these prizes he sent into French ports.

Upon his arrival at Nantes, he forwarded the letter which he had received from the Marine Committee of Congress, to the American Commissioners at Paris, Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane, and Arthur Lee. In this letter, Captain Jones writes :

“ It is my first and favorite wish to be employed in active and enterprising service, where there is a prospect of rendering acceptable services to America. The singular honor which Congress has done me, by their generous conduct, has inspired sentiments of gratitude which I shall carry with me to the grave. And if a life of services devoted to America, can be made instrumental in securing its independence, I shall regard the continuance of such approbation as an honor far superior to what kings even could bestow.”

He urged that since our navy was so feeble that it could not cope with the powerful armament of England, our only feasible course was to send out small squadrons, and surprise defenceless situations. This was the course adopted. By invitation of the Commissioners, Captain Jones repaired to Paris, where he met with a severe disappointment. This is explained in the following extract from his first despatch from Nantes

“The Commissioners had provided for me one of the finest frigates that was ever built, calculated for thirty guns on one deck, and capable of carrying thirty-six pounders. But they were under the necessity of giving her up, on account of some difficulties they met at court.”

The failure of this plan was owing to the vigilance of the British minister at Amsterdam. He discovered the secret of her ownership and destination, and remonstrated so effectually as to thwart the plan. He then decided to put to sea with the *Ranger*, as soon as possible. The Commissioners addressed to him the following instructions :

“As it is not in our power to procure you such a ship as you expected, we advise you, after equipping the *Ranger* in the best manner for the cruise you propose, that you shall proceed with her in the manner you shall judge best for distressing the enemies of the United States, by sea or otherwise, consistent with the laws of war, and the terms of your commission.”

On the 10th of February, 1778, Captain Jones, in the *Ranger*, sailed down the Loire, and coasted along in a northerly direction to Brest, then the great naval depot of France, enjoying one of the finest harbors in the world. In this month a treaty of alliance between France and the United States

was signed at Paris. France was the first nation to recognize the independence of the United States, and to recognize the Congress of the thirteen colonies as a legitimate Government.

France promptly engaged in fitting out a naval expedition to assist the American colonies.

## CHAPTER III.

### *Bearding the British Lion.*

**Aid from France.**—Plan for the Destruction of the British Fleet.—  
**The American Flag Saluted.**—Bold Movement of Captain Jones  
—Cruise along the Shores of England.—Capture of Prizes.—  
Salutary Lessons given to England.—Operations in the Frith of  
Clyde.—At Carrickfergus.—Attempt upon the Drake.—Burning  
the Shipping at Whitehaven.—Capture of the Plate of Lord  
Selkirk.

FRANCE, upon recognizing the independence of the United States and entering into an alliance with our Government, promptly engaged in fitting out a naval expedition to assist the American patriots who were so heroically struggling for freedom. Captain Jones immediately wrote a letter to the Commissioners in Paris, suggesting a plan of operations for the French fleet, which was placed under the command of Count d'Estaing. The count was a brave man, an able officer, and was heartily devoted to the cause of the feeble colonies. The plan Captain Jones recommended was eventually adopted. Had it been at once carried into execution, it would probably have

so crippled the English as to have brought the war to a speedy termination.

Nearly the whole British fleet, sent to operate against the colonies, was in the Delaware. It had abundant supplies for the British army, which, almost without hindrance, was ranging the country, plundering and burning. The plan proposed was, that Count d'Estaing, with the superior force which he had under his command, should fall suddenly upon the British fleet under Lord Howe, and destroy it, or, at least block it up in the Delaware, with all the transport ships under its convoy. This could then have easily been done.

But unfortunately the fleet, instead of being fitted out at Brest, on the Atlantic coast, whence it could have a speedy voyage across the Atlantic, was got ready at Toulon, a Mediterranean port, requiring a much longer voyage. Just before the fleet arrived, Lord Howe, aware of his danger, had effected his escape. In those days the French fleet could have arrived almost as soon as the intelligence of the alliance had reached these shores. In a letter to M. De Sartine, the French Minister of Marine, Captain Jones subsequently writes:

“ Had Count d'Estaing arrived in the Delaware a few days sooner, he might have made a glorious and most easy conquest. Many successful projects may

be adopted from the hints which I had the honor to draw up. And if I can furnish more, or execute any of those already furnished, so as to distress and humble the common enemy, it will afford me the truest pleasure."

Captain Jones, on his voyage from Nantes to Brest, convoyed some American merchant vessels as far as Quiberon Bay. Thence they were to be convoyed to America by a French fleet, commanded by Admiral La Motte Piquet. Here, for the first time, the Stars and Stripes of our Union received the honor of a national salute. John Paul Jones managed the somewhat delicate affair with the instincts of a gentleman, and the sensitiveness of an accomplished naval officer, conscious that the honor of the infant nation was, in some degree, intrusted to his guardianship. I give the interesting event in his own words. In a letter to the Marine Committee, dated February 22, 1778, he writes :

"I am happy in having it in my power to congratulate you on my having seen the American flag, for the first time, recognized in the fullest and completest manner by the flag of France. I was off their bay the 13th instant, and sent my boat in, the next day, to know if the admiral would return my salute. He answered that he would return to me, as the senior American Continental officer in Europe, the

same salute which he was authorized, by his court to return to an admiral of Holland, or any other republic; which was four guns less than the salute given. I hesitated at this, for I had demanded gun for gun.

"Therefore I anchored in the entrance of the bay, at a distance from the French fleet. But, after a very particular inquiry, on the 14th, finding that he had really told the truth, I was induced to accept of his offer, the more so as it was, in fact, an acknowledgment of American independence. The wind being contrary and blowing hard, it was after sunset before the Ranger got near enough to salute La Motte Piquet with thirteen guns, which he returned with nine. However, to put the matter beyond a doubt, I did not suffer the Independence to salute till next morning, when I sent the admiral word that I would sail through his fleet in the brig, and would salute him in open day. He was exceedingly pleased, and he returned the compliment also with nine guns."

The Independence here alluded to, it is said, was a privateer which had been fitted out to sail under the orders of Captain Jones. His sailing through the French fleet was characteristic of the man, as he fully appreciated, at this time, the importance of this interchange of national courtesies.

and the importance that it should be so emphatically done that there could be no denial of it. Thus he who first raised the American Pine-Tree flag to the topmast of the Alfred, and who first unfurled the national banner from the Ranger, now enjoyed the honor of being the first to secure for that flag a national salute. The times have changed. The infant republic has become one of the most powerful nations on the globe. There is no Government now which hesitates to return, in salute of our national banner, gun for gun,

On the 10th of April, Captain Jones, in the Ranger, sailed from Brest. It was his intention to strike a blow first upon some unprotected point on the south side of England. It was indeed a bold and chivalric movement for the little Ranger, with her eighteen guns, to plunge into the very heart of the British Channel, which was crowded with the massive seventy-fours of Britain's proud navy. England was discharging the broadsides of her invincible fleet upon our defenceless towns, and was landing her boats' crews to apply the torch to our peaceful villages. Not a fishing-boat could leave a cove without danger of capture and the imprisonment of all the crew.

Little did the British Government imagine that any commander of an American vessel would have the audacity to approach even within sight of her



shores. It was the main design of Captain Jones to punish England for the atrocities she was so cruelly perpetrating upon us—and to punish her in kind. On the 10th of August he launched forth, from the magnificent harbor of Brest, and directed his course almost due north, for Land's End, the extreme southern cape of the island of Great Britain. The distance across, at this point, is about one hundred and fifty miles.

About thirty miles off the southern coast of England, in a southwest direction, there is a group of islands called the Scilly Islands. Captain Jones ran his vessel between them and Cape Clear, within full view of the shores of England, and where the flash of his guns could be seen and the thunders of his cannon distinctly heard on those shores. Opposing winds and a rough sea so impeded his progress that he did not gain sight of England's coast until the 14th. Then he descried a merchant-brig. He bore down upon her and captured her. The brig was freighted with flax, and was bound from Ireland to Ostend, in Belgium. As the freight was of no value, and Captain Jones did not wish to encumber himself with prisoners, the crew were sent ashore in the boats and the brig was scuttled and sunk.

These tidings must have created a strange sensation, as they spread like wildfire throughout Eng-

land. It must have roused the whole British navy to wreak vengeance upon the intrepid voyager. He then entered St. George's Channel, which separates Southern England from Ireland. When almost within sight of the spires of Dublin he encountered, on the 17th of August, a large London ship. He captured her. Her cargo consisted of a variety of valuable merchandise. The crew were sent ashore. The prize he manned and sent back to Brest.

Thus far dense clouds had darkened their way, and rough winds had ploughed the seas, but now the weather changed. The skies became fair and the wind favorable. He sailed rapidly along into the Irish Sea, and passed by the Isle of Man, intending to make a descent at Whitehaven, with whose harbor and surroundings he from childhood had been familiar. About ten o'clock in the evening of the 17th, he was off the harbor, with a boat's crew of picked men ready to enter and set fire to the shipping. But the wind, which had been blowing strong during the afternoon, by eleven o'clock increased to a gale, blowing directly on shore, and raising such a heavy sea that the boats could not leave the ships. During the night the storm so increased, threatening to drive the vessel upon the rocks, that it became necessary to crowd all sail, and put out to sea so as to clear the land.

The next morning the storm abated, and the Ranger was near Glestine Bay, just off the southern coast of Scotland. A revenue wherry hove in sight. It was the custom of the revenue boat to board all merchant vessels in search of contraband goods. As the Ranger concealed, as much as possible, all warlike appearance, Captain Jones hoped that the wherry, which was one of the swiftest of sailers, would come alongside, so that he might effect her capture. But it seems that the tidings of the Ranger had reached the ears of the officers of the governmental boat. After examining the vessel carefully with their glasses, they crowded on all sail, to escape. The Ranger pursued, opening upon the affrighted boat a severe cannonade. The balls bounded over the waves, and the explosions reverberated amid the cliffs of Scotland, but the wherry escaped.

The next morning, April 19th, when near the extreme southern cape of Scotland, called the Mull of Galloway, he overtook one of the merchant schooners of the enemy, from which he took what he wanted, sent the crew ashore, and sunk the vessel. By a just retribution he was thus chastising England for the crimes she was committing on the American coast. Hudibras writes :

“ No man e’er felt the halter draw  
With good opinion of the law.”

England was astonished and enraged in finding the laws of naval warfare which she had enacted, and had so long practised with impunity upon all other nations all around the globe, now brought home to herself. She called Paul Jones all manner of hard names. He was a beggar, a thief, a traitor, a highway robber, a pirate. He was thus denounced for doing that, in the English and Irish Channel, which England's fleet was doing all along the coast of America. And yet it was heroic in Jones thus to brave all the terrors of the British navy, while it was ignoble and mean for that proud navy to plunder and burn the few unprotected vessels of the feeble colonies struggling for existence in the New World.

England had long made her banqueting-halls resound with the song,

"Britannia needs no bulwarks  
To frown along the steep ;  
Her march is on the mountain wave,  
Her home is on the deep."

It was the noble mission of Paul Jones to teach Britannia that the arm of the avenger could reach her even in her own Channel, and in her own harbors. Thus England was compelled to drink of the poisoned cup which she was forcing to the lips of others.

Upon the western coast of Scotland, about fifty

miles north of the Muli of Galloway, there was a capacious harbor called Lochryan, or Lake Ryan. Captain Jones learned from his captives that there was there a fleet of ten or twelve English merchant vessels, and also the tender of a man-of-war, which had on board a large number of impressed seamen, who were to be forced into the British navy. It was not improbable that many of these were American citizens, who had been seized in our merchant or fishing vessels, and who would thus be compelled to work the guns of Great Britain against their own countrymen. "I thought this an enterprise," writes Paul Jones, "worthy of my attention."

Indeed it was. He spread his sails for Lochryan. The wind was fair, so that he could run into the bay, speedily apply the torch, kindle the whole fleet into flame, and then run out before a sufficient force could be collected to prevent his escape. But just as he reached the entrance of the bay, and everything was in readiness for the successful prosecution of his enterprise, the wind changed, and blew with great fierceness directly into the bay. Thus, though he could easily effect his entrance, he could not sail out from the bay until the wind changed. He might therefore be caught in a trap. He was thus constrained to abandon the project.

About sixty miles north of Lochryan is the

Frith of Clyde, whose river is the most important stream in the west of Scotland. Captain Jones seeing upon his lee bow a cutter, or small sloop-rigged vessel, belonging as a tender to a man-of-war, steering for the Clyde, gave chase. But when he reached the remarkable rock of Ailsa, finding that the cutter was outsailing him, he abandoned the chase. In the evening he fell in with a merchant sloop, which he sunk.

The next day, which was the 21st, he entered the Bay of Carrickfergus, on the eastern coast of Ireland. At the western extremity of the bay lies the city of Belfast, which occupies the first rank among the commercial marts of Ireland. The fortified town of Carrickfergus is situated upon the northern shore. A British ship of war, the Drake, mounting twenty guns, was at anchor in the bay. Thoroughly armed and manned, she was a formidable antagonist for the Ranger to attack. As vessels of all sizes were continually coming and going in this great thoroughfare, and as the Ranger carefully avoided all warlike appearance, no suspicion of her formidable character was excited on board the Drake. Jones therefore cast anchor, preparing to make his attack in the night. I will give the result in his own words:

“ My plan was to overlay her cable, and to fall

upon her bow, so as to have all her decks open and exposed to our musketry. At the same time it was our intention to have secured the enemy by grapplings, so that, had they cut their cables, they would not thereby have attained an advantage. The wind was high, and unfortunately the anchor was not let go so soon as the order was given; so that the Ranger was brought to upon the enemy's quarter, at the distance of half a cable's length.

"We had made no warlike appearance. Of course, we had given no alarm. This determined me to cut immediately, which might appear as if the cable had parted. At the same time it enabled me, after making a tack out of the Loch, to return with the same advantage which I had at first. I was, however, prevented from returning, as I with difficulty weathered the light-house on the leeside, and as the gale increased. The weather now became so very stormy and severe, and the sea ran so high, that I was obliged to take shelter under the south shore of Scotland."

The North Channel, which separates Ireland from Scotland, is at this point about thirty miles wide. The next morning the sun rose in a cloudless sky. It was bitterly cold in those northern latitudes. Captain Jones was on the same parallel with Newfoundland. From the deck of his vessel he could

clearly discern the coasts of England, Scotland, and Ireland. A white mantle of snow covered the hills and valleys as far as the eye could extend. He decided to direct his course to the shores of England, and to make another attempt upon the shipping in the harbor of Whitehaven. The wind became very light, and it was not until midnight that he reached the entrance to the harbor. For the hazardous enterprise of penetrating a harbor defended by two batteries, he manned two boats with volunteers, fifteen men in each. There were in the harbor two hundred and twenty vessels, large and small. The tide was out, and many of these vessels aground. About one hundred and fifty of them were on the south side of the harbor adjoining the town. The remainder were on the north side.

Captain Jones had command of one of the boats. Lieutenant Wallingford was intrusted with the other. Jones supplied Wallingford with the necessary combustibles to set fire to the shipping on the north side. With fifteen men, armed only with pistols and cutlasses, he set out to capture two English forts on the south side, and then to set fire to the shipping there. The garrisons of these forts had no more apprehension of an attack from the despised Americans, than Gibraltar fears assault from some



feeble tribe in Southern Asia with whom England may chance to be at war.

In consequence of the unfortunate delay, they did not reach the first fort until just as the morning was beginning to dawn. Most of the soldiers were soundly asleep in the guard-house. There were a few drowsy sentinels dozing at their posts. Jones, with his heroic little band, silently clambered over the ramparts. The terrified sentinels, not knowing what was coming, rushed into the guard-house. Jones quietly locked them in, spiked every gun, and then rushed forward to the next battery, which was distant about a quarter of a mile. Here he successfully repeated his achievement, so that not a gun from either of the batteries could harm his boats.

He looked eagerly across the harbor, expecting to see the bursting forth of the flames. It was now broad day; but no sign of flame or smoke was to be seen. To his great disappointment, the boat under Lieutenant Wallingford had crossed to the south side, having accomplished nothing. The party seemed confused and embarrassed, and made the very extraordinary statement that their torches went out just as they were ready to set fire to the ships!

The failure was probably caused by sheer cowardice. And it must be admitted that it was

indeed one of the most desperate of enterprises. These fifteen men, having crossed an ocean three thousand miles wide, had penetrated the heart of a British harbor, to apply the torch to seventy vessels.

The crews could not have amounted to less than ten men, on an average, to each vessel. Thus the British sailors alone in that half of the harbor, would amount to seven hundred men. The assailants, it will be remembered, amounted to but fifteen men, in a frail boat, armed only with swords and pistols. Even the bravest might recoil from such odds. But as these men had volunteered for the enterprise, and knew all its perils, it was the basest poltroonery in them to prove recreant at the crisis of the expedition.

The torches which Captain Jones's boat party carried, had also, by some strange fatality, all burned out. Captain Jones, however, obtained a light from a neighboring house, entered a large ship, from which the crew fled, and deliberately built a fire in the steerage. This ship was closely surrounded by at least a hundred and fifty vessels lying side by side, and all aground. Captain Jones, to make the conflagration certain, found a barrel of tar, and poured it upon the kindling. The flames soon burst from all the hatchways, caught the rigging and, in fiery wreaths, circled to the mast-head.

“The inhabitants,” writes Captain Jones, “began to appear in thousands, and individuals ran hastily toward us. I stood between them and the ship on fire, with a pistol in my hand, and ordered them to retire, which they did with precipitation. The sun was a full hour’s march above the horizon, and, as sleep no longer ruled the world, it was time to retire. We reëmbarked without opposition, having released a number of prisoners, as our boats could not carry them. After all my people had embarked, I stood upon the pier, for a considerable space, yet no person advanced. I saw all the eminences round the town covered with the amazed inhabitants.”

When the boats had been rowed some distance from the shore, the English began to run to their forts, to open fire from the great guns. To their surprise they found the garrisons locked up in the guard-houses, and the cannon all spiked. After some delay they found one or two cannon on the beach, which were dismounted, and which had not been spiked. These they hastily loaded and fired; but with such ill-directed aim that the shot all fell wide of their mark. Captain Jones’s men, in derision, fired their pistols, returning the salute.

If the boats could have entered the harbor a few hours earlier, the success would doubtless have been complete, and not a vessel would have escaped the

flames. "But what was done," writes Captain Jones, "is sufficient to show that not all their boasted navy can protect their own coasts; and that the scenes of distress, which they have occasioned in America, may be soon brought home to their own door."

The Ranger now struck across the broad mouth of Solway Frith, to St. Mary's Island, on the Scottish shore, in Kirkcudbright Bay. Here Lord Selkirk had his residence, in a fine mansion. It will be remembered that the father of Paul Jones had been attached to his household. The British were shutting up our most illustrious men in the hulks of prison ships, and treating them with barbarity which would have disgraced savages. Captain Jones deemed it of the utmost importance, as a measure of humanity, to seize some distinguished Englishman and hold him as a hostage, to secure the better treatment of our own noble men who had fallen into the enemy's hands. For this patriotic movement the English press denounced him in terms of unmeasured abuse. The motive which influenced him was an exalted one. And he merits the highest encomiums for the manner in which he conducted the enterprise. In justice to Captain Jones, I feel bound to give the narrative in his own words. It is contained in letter which he wrote to the Countess

of Selkirk, with whom he was personally acquainted, immediately after the *Ranger* returned from its cruise to Brest.

“*RANGER, BREST, May 8.*

“TO THE COUNTESS OF SELKIRK.

“MADAM—It cannot be too much lamented that, in the profession of arms, the officer of fine feeling and of real sensibility should be under the necessity of winking at any action of persons under his command which his heart cannot approve. But the reflection is doubly severe, when he finds himself obliged, in appearance, to countenance such actions by his authority.

“This hard case was mine when, on the 23d of April last, I landed on St. Mary’s Isle. Knowing Lord Selkirk’s interest with his king, and esteeming, as I do, his private character, I wished to make him the happy instrument of alleviating the horrors of hopeless captivity, when the brave are overpowered and made prisoners of war.

“It was perhaps fortunate for you, madam, that he was from home; for it was my intention to have taken him on board the *Ranger*, and to have detained him until, through his means, a general and fair exchange of prisoners, as well in Europe as in America, had been effected.

“When I was informed, by some men whom I

met at landing, that his lordship was absent, I walked back to my boat determined to leave the island. On the way, however, some officers who were with me, could not forbear expressing their discontent. They said that, in America, no delicacy was shown by the English, who took away all sorts of movable property; setting fire not only to towns and to the houses of the rich, without distinction, but not even sparing the wretched hamlets and milch cows of the poor and helpless, at the approach of an inclement winter.

“That party had been with me, the same morning, at Whitehaven. Some complaisance was therefore their due. I had but a moment to think how I might gratify them, and, at the same time, do your ladyship the least injury. I charged the two officers to permit none of the seamen to enter the house, or to hurt anything about it; to treat you, madam with the utmost respect; to accept of the plate which was offered; and to come away, without making a search or demanding anything else.

“I am induced to believe that I was punctually obeyed; since I am informed that the plate, which they brought away, is far short of the quantity expressed in the inventory which accompanied it. I have gratified my men. And when the plate is sold I shall become its purchaser, and will gratify my own

feelings by restoring it to you, by such conveyance as you shall please to direct.

“Had the Earl been on board the *Ranger* the following evening, he would have seen the awful pomp and dreadful carnage of a sea engagement ; both affording ample subject for the pencil, as well as melancholy reflection to the contemplative mind. Humanity starts back from such scenes of horror, and cannot sufficiently execrate the vile promoters of this detestable war.

“‘For *they*, ’twas *they* unsheathed the ruthless blade,  
And Heaven shall ask the havoc it has made.’

“The British ship-of-war *Drake*, mounting twenty guns, with more than her full complement of officers and men, was our opponent. The ships met, and the advantage was disputed, with great fortitude on each side, for an hour and four minutes, when the gallant commander of the *Drake* fell, and victory declared in favor of the *Ranger*. The amiable lieutenant lay mortally wounded ; a melancholy demonstration of the uncertainty of human prospects, and of the sad reverses of fortune which an hour can produce. I buried them in a spacious grave, with the honors due to the memory of the brave

“Though I have drawn my sword, in the present generous struggle for the rights of man, yet I am

not in arms as an American, nor am I in pursuit of riches. My fortune is liberal enough, having no wife nor family, and having lived long enough to know that riches cannot insure happiness. I profess myself a citizen of the world, totally unfettered by the little, mean distinctions of climate or of country, which diminish the benevolence of the heart and set bounds to philanthropy. Before this war was begun I had, at an early time of life, withdrawn from sea service, in favor of calm contemplation and poetic ease. I have sacrificed not only my favorite scheme of life, but the softer affections of the heart and my prospects of domestic happiness, and I am ready to sacrifice my life also, with cheerfulness, if that forfeiture could restore peace and good-will among mankind.

“As the feelings of your gentle bosom cannot but be congenial with mine, let me entreat you, madam, to use your persuasive art, with your husband’s, to endeavor to stop this cruel and destructive war, in which Britain never can succeed. Heaven can never countenance the barbarous and unmanly practice of the Britons in America, which savages would blush at, and which, if not discontinued, will soon be retaliated on Britain by a justly enraged people. Should you fail in this, for I am persuaded that you will attempt it—and who can resist the power of such an



advocate?—your endeavors to effect a general exchange of prisoners will be an act of humanity which will afford you golden feelings on your death-bed.

“I hope this cruel contest will soon be closed. But should it continue, I wage no war with the fair. I acknowledge their force and bend before it with submission. Let not, therefore, the amiable Countess of Selkirk regard me as an enemy. I am ambitious of her esteem and friendship, and would do anything consistent with my duty to merit it.

“The honor of a line, from your hand, in answer to this, will lay me under a singular obligation. And if I can render you any acceptable service in France or elsewhere, I hope you see into my character so far as to command me without the least grain of reserve.

“I wish to know exactly the behavior of my people, as I am determined to punish them if they exceed their liberty. I have the honor to be, with much esteem and with profound respect,

“Madam, yours, etc.,

“JOHN PAUL JONES’

## CHAPTER IV.

### *Captain Jones at Nantes and at Brest.*

**Correspondence with Lord Selkirk.—Terrible Battle with the Ship Drake.—Capture of the Ship.—Carnage on board the Drake.—Generosity to Captured Fishermen.—Insubordination of Lieutenant Simpson.—Embarrassments of Captain Jones.—Hopes and Disappointments.—Proofs of Unselfish Patriotism.—Letter to the King of France.—Anecdote of Poor Richard.**

THE letter of Paul Jones to the Countess of Selkirk was published widely throughout England, and attracted much attention. Dr. Franklin wrote to Captain Jones from Paris :

“ It was a gallant letter, and must give her ladyship a high opinion of your generosity and nobleness of mind.”

The plate fell into the hands of the prize agents. After much difficulty and considerable delay, Captain Jones succeeded in purchasing it, though at a price above its real value. He then returned it to Lord Selkirk, himself defraying all the expenses of transportation. Lord Selkirk, in acknowledging its receipt, from London, under date of August, 1789, wrote :

Notwithstanding all the precautions you took for the easy and uninterrupted conveyance of the plate, yet it met with considerable delays, first at Calais, next at Dover, then at London. However, it at last arrived at Dumfries. I intended to have put an article in the newspapers about your having returned it. But before I was informed of its being arrived, some of your friends, I suppose, had put it into the Dumfries newspaper, whence it was immediately copied into the Edinburgh papers, and thence into the London ones. Since that time I have mentioned it to many people of fashion.

“And on all occasions, both now and formerly, I have done you the justice to tell that you made an offer of returning the plate very soon after your return to Brest; and although you yourself was not at my house, but remained at the shore with your boat, that you had your officers and men in such extraordinary good discipline, that your having given them the strictest orders to behave well, to do no injury of any kind, to make no search, but only to bring off what plate was given them; that in reality they did exactly as ordered, and that not one man offered to stir from his post on the outside of the house, nor entered the doors, nor said an uncivil word; that the two officers staid not a quarter of an hour in the parlor and in the butler's pantry, while

the butler got the plate together, behaved politely, and asked for nothing but the plate, and instantly marched their men off, in regular order, and that both officers and men behaved in all respects so well that it would have done credit to the best disciplined troops whatever."

The style of Captain Jones's letter has been found fault with. But in literary excellence it is certainly above that of the English lord. One of the London papers said of him :

" Paul Jones is about thirty-six years of age, of a middling stature, well proportioned, with an agreeable countenance. His conversation shows him to be a man of talents, and that he has a liberal education. His letters, in foreign gazettes, show that he can fight with the pen as well as with the sword."

In the letter which Captain Jones sent to Lord Selkirk upon the return of the plate, he wrote :

" The long delay that has happened to the restoration of your plate, has given me much concern, and I now feel a proportionate pleasure in fulfilling what was my first intention. My motive for landing at your estate in Scotland was to take *you*, as a hostage for the lives and liberties of a number of the citizens of America, who had been taken in war on the ocean and committed to British prisons, under an act of Parliament, as *traitors, pirates* and *felons*. You ob-

served to Mr Alexander that my idea was a mistaken one, because you were not, as I had supposed. in favor with the British ministry, who knew *that you favored the cause of liberty*. On that account, I am glad that you were absent from your estate when I landed there, as I bore no personal enmity, but the contrary, toward you. I afterward had the happiness to redeem my fellow-citizens from Britain, by means far more glorious than through the medium of any single hostage.

“As I have endeavored to serve the cause of liberty, through every stage of the American Revolution, and have sacrificed to it my private ease, a part of my fortune, and some of my blood, I could have no selfish motive in permitting my people to demand and carry off your plate. My sole inducement was to turn their attention and stop their rage from breaking out and retaliating on your house and effects the too wanton burnings and desolation that had been committed against their relations and fellow-citizens in America, by the British ; of which, I assure you, you would have felt the severe consequences, had I not fallen on an expedient to prevent it, and hurried my people away before they had time for further reflection.”

We must now return from this episode to the continuance of Captain Jones's cruise. In his letter

to Lady Selkirk, he alludes to a naval battle with the ship Drake. After the descent upon Mary's Island, Captain Jones again stood across the Channel from the Scottish to the Irish shore. On the morning of the 24th, he arrived off the Bay of Carrickfergus, and would again have entered, to make an attack upon the Drake, had he not seen that that ship was spreading her sails to come out. The wind was very light and the progress of the British ship slow. The captain of the Drake had heard of the ravages of the Ranger, for the appalling tidings had spread far and wide, and he was coming out in search of her. Seeing this vessel in the distance, a boat was sent out from the Drake to reconnoitre. Captain Jones kept the ship's stern directly toward the approaching boat, and so succeeded in disguising his true character that though the boat's crew carefully scrutinized him with a spy-glass, they were completely deceived, and, hailing the vessel, came alongside. As soon as the officer stepped upon the quarter-deck, he found, to his great surprise, himself a prisoner and his boat captured.

Captain Jones learned, from his captives, that the night before an express had reached the Drake, with tidings of the destruction of the shipping at Whitehaven; and the Drake had immediately increased its crew by a large number of volunteers, and was

now pressing forward in pursuit of the Ranger. Alarm fires were also seen on the eminences on both sides of the Channel, their columns of smoke rising high into the air. It was evident that the achievements of the bold little Ranger had created a great commotion, rousing all England to a sense of danger, for no one knew upon what point her next blows might fall.

The wind was light and the tide unfavorable, so that the Drake worked out of the bay slowly. Captain Jones awaited her arrival, laying to with courses up, and main-topsail to the mast. At length, the Drake, having reached the mid-channel, came within hailing distance, and ran up the flag of England. At the same instant the Stars and Stripes were unfurled at the topmast of the Ranger. Still an officer on the quarter-deck of the Drake shouted out :

“What ship is that?”

The reply was immediately returned :

“It is the American Continental ship Ranger. We are waiting for you. The sun is but little more than an hour from setting. It is therefore time to begin.”

The Drake was astern of the Ranger. Jones ordered the helm up, and as his vessel rounded to, discharged a full broadside into the thronged decks of the Drake. The iron storm crashed through timbers and bones and quivering nerves with terrible

**destruction** But the spirit of war can never arrest its energies to compassionate its victims. The guns of the Drake were loaded and shotted, and the gunners stood, with lighted torches, at their posts. Instantly the fire was returned, while the dead were left in their blood, and the wounded were hurried to the cockpit, to writhe beneath the cuttings of the surgeon's knife.

Thus, for an hour and four minutes, the dreadful conflict continued. The thunders of the exploding guns, booming over the waves, echoed along the shores of England, Scotland, and Ireland. The British Government dreamed not that its feeble colonies could do anything more than present a brief and totally unavailing resistance behind frail ramparts, suddenly thrown up, three thousand miles away, on the other side of the Atlantic. And yet here were those colonies putting forth energies which were burning ships in England's home harbors, and bombarding her frigates in her own Channel.

At the close of an hour and four minutes of as obstinate a naval battle as could be fought, the Drake dropped her flag and cried for quarter. Her fore and main-topsail yards were both cut away, and hung down on the cap. The top-gallant yard and mizzen gaff were also torn from their fastenings and were dangling against the mast. The first flag had



been shot away. They had raised a second That also had fallen before the incessant storm of iron hail, and was draggling in the water. Her masts and yards were all more or less shattered, while the main-mast was so seriously wounded as to be in danger of falling. The jib was shot away, and, held by the cordage, was floating on the waves. The hull was pierced in many places, shivered and splintered by the balls.

Upon entering the captured ship an appalling spectacle met the eye. A hundred and ninety men had crowded it, in the full assurance of victory. Of these, forty-two were either killed or wounded. A musket-ball had pierced the brain of the captain, and he lay weltering in blood, silent in death. The first lieutenant had also been struck by a mortal wound, and was in death's convulsions.

It is very remarkable that on board the Ranger there was but one man killed and six wounded. The night succeeding this terrible storm of human violence was severe and the ocean tranquil. As all hands were busy in refitting the shattered vessels, an English merchant brig came along, bound for Norway. It was captured without difficulty. As English men-of-war were crowding St. George's Channel Captain Jones decided to pass through the

North Channel with his two prizes, and **return to Brest** by the west coast of Ireland.

When Captain Jones first made his appearance off Carrickfergus Bay, he captured a fishing-boat to make inquiries respecting the shipping within the bay. As secrecy was essential to his plan of operation, it was necessary to detain those fishermen with their boat. Otherwise they would communicate intelligence of his movements, and abundant preparations would be made to repel him. It was no longer necessary to detain them. Captain Jones writes :

“It was now time to release the honest fishermen, whom I took up here on the 21st. And, as the poor fellows had lost their boat, she having sunk in the late stormy weather, I was happy in having it in my power to give them the necessary sum to purchase everything new which they had lost. I gave them also a good boat, to transport themselves ashore ; and sent with them two infirm men, on whom I bestowed the last guinea in my possession, to defray their travelling expenses to their proper home in Dublin. They took with them one of the Drake's sails, which would sufficiently explain what had happened to the volunteers. The grateful fishermen were in raptures ; and expressed their joy in their **huzzas** as they passed the Ranger's quarter.”

This was indeed extraordinary magnanimity when we contrast it with the conduct of England, bombarding and burning our defenceless villages, immuring our most illustrious men in the dungeons of hulks, worse than the oubliettes of the Bastile, and robbing poor fishermen of everything, burning their boats, and often impressing them into her navy, and compelling them to serve the guns against their own countrymen.

Contrary winds so impeded the progress of Captain Jones that it was not until the 5th of May that he had skirted the western coast of Ireland, and reached Ushant, a French island a few miles distant from the extreme northwestern coast of France. The Ranger was accompanied by the two vessels she had taken, having the torn and battered Drake in tow. A ship hove in sight to the leeward, steering for the Channel. Captain Jones cast off the Drake, by cutting the hawser, and gave chase to the stranger. His swift-sailing vessel overtook the chase in little more than an hour, and hailing her, found that she was a Swede. He therefore immediately hauled by the wind and returned to the southward to rejoin the Drake, which was then scarcely perceptible in the distant horizon.

The evolutions of the Drake surprised him. She seemed to be trying to put as much distance as pos-

sible between herself and the Ranger. Several large ships appeared steering into the Channel. But Jones was prevented from pursuing them in consequence of the extraordinary evolutions of the Drake. He made signals. They were totally disregarded. It was not until the next day he succeeded in overtaking the runaway Drake. Her commanding officer, Lieutenant Simpson, was immediately placed under arrest for disobedience of orders.

It would seem that the lieutenant left America with the impression, and doubtless a correct one, that, upon arriving in France, Captain Jones was to be transferred to another and much finer ship, while he was to be left in command of the Drake. He consequently seemed to feel that the Drake and her crew belonged to him, and the temporary captain was rather a passenger whom he was conveying to his destination. He therefore assumed airs, and was guilty of petty acts of insubordination, which were very annoying to Captain Jones, who was a strict disciplinarian.

Moreover, Lieutenant Simpson allowed his republican principles to carry him so far as to advocate a republican form of government even upon the decks of a war-ship. He declared to the sailors, that they, being free and enlightened American citizens, were entitled to decide, by the voice of the

majority, respecting all questions of importance on ship-board ; that the captain was to be their agent to perform their will. Simpson was daily growing more discontented with the position he occupied, and was probably intending to run away with the *Drake*, one of the best finished of England's war-ships, to repair her in some French harbor, and to sail forth on a cruise upon his own responsibility, perhaps as a French privateersman.

But for this insubordination on the part of Lieutenant Simpson, Captain Jones would doubtless have taken several other important prizes. The *Ranger*, with her two prizes, returned to the harbor of Brest, and cast anchor there on the 9th of May, having been absent but one month. In the mean time the French squadron, under Count d'Estaing, had been made ready for sea. The news of the brilliant achievements of Paul Jones electrified France and appalled England. The alarm infused along the coasts of Great Britain and Ireland amounted almost to a panic. Lookout vessels were constantly cruising along the shores. The militia were called out. New fortifications were constructed. The whole population of the seacoast was kept in a state of constant alarm.

But Captain Jones was now in great pecuniary embarrassment. The Colonial Government was so poor that it could not honor his drafts. He was not

only unable to refit his ship, but was in want of the means of providing the daily food for his crew. When he left America he had advanced, from his own means, seven thousand dollars for the public service. He had, in a foreign land, two hundred prisoners of war to be provided for, a number of his own sick and wounded, and his ship to be repaired, shattered by a terrible engagement, and destitute of provisions and stores. And he was not allowed to dispose of his prizes until he received further orders from the home Government.

After a vast amount of mental suffering he succeeded, by his personal credit with distinguished French noblemen, Count d'Orvilliers and the Duke de Chartres, in raising money to meet his immediate and most pressing wants, and in refitting both the *Ranger* and the *Drake* for sea. The British seamen who were prisoners, if released, would be immediately forced on board the British men-of-war to man their guns. It was also necessary to retain them to effect exchanges for our own captive countrymen, whom the British were treating with such great barbarity. In his letters to the Government he urged the imperious necessity of supplying the seamen with the little necessities and comforts of life. He also, while entreating that the English prisoners should be treated with kindness, and all their needful wants

supplied urged that they should by no means be released without an exchange. He now, during several months, passed through a series of trials, mortifications, and disappointments, a detail of which would but weary the reader. In carefully examining his voluminous correspondence, during this season of trial, when his whole soul was glowing with the desire for active service, and when the inactivity to which he was doomed was, to him, almost insupportable, I cannot find a single expression unworthy of his noble character, as a self-denying patriot, a gallant officer, and a humane gentleman.

Humanity required that England should feel the horrors of war which she was so mercilessly inflicting upon her infant colonies. In no other way could she be induced to sheathe the sword. He proposed to the Commissioners in Paris another expedition, of three fast-sailing frigates, to destroy three hundred vessels in the harbor at Whitehaven, to burn the town, and to destroy the important coal-works there.

As time would be requisite to prepare for so important an expedition, he proposed that a smaller force should immediately be fitted out, to harass the northern coasts of Great Britain, and to lay contributions upon the important towns. On the 10th of July, 1778, Dr. Franklin wrote him saying :

“ In consequence of the high opinion which the

Minister of Marine has of your conduct and bravery it is now settled that you are to have the frigate from Holland, which will be furnished with as many good French seamen as you may require. As you may like to have a number of Americans, and your own crew are homesick, it is proposed to give you as many as you can engage, out of two hundred prisoners which the ministry of Britain have, at length, agreed to give in exchange for those you have in your hands. They propose to make the exchange at Calais, where they are to bring the Americans. The project of giving you the command of this ship pleases me the more, as it is a probable opening to the higher preferment you so justly merit."

The conduct of Lieutenant Simpson had been exasperating in the highest degree, and yet Captain Jones wrote to the Commissioners, on the 4th of July:

"Lieutenant Simpson has certainly behaved amiss. Yet I can forgive as well as resent. Upon his making a proper concession, I will, with your approbation, not only forgive the past, but leave him the command of the Ranger."

In anticipation of a speedy command, Captain Jones was anxious to secure the services of a chaplain. In a communication to a friend whom he



desired to assist him in obtaining such an officer, he wrote :

“I should wish the chaplain to be a man of reading and of letters, who understands, speaks, and writes the French and English with elegance and propriety. For political reasons it would be well if he were a clergyman of the Protestant profession, whose sanctity of manners, and happy, natural principles would diffuse unanimity and cheerfulness through the ship. Such a man would be worthy of the highest confidence.”

On the 10th of August, Captain Jones repaired to Brest, expecting to be put in command of the splendid ship which had been promised. This ship belonged to the Government. To his bitter disappointment he found that it had been assigned to another man. Lieutenant Simpson sailed to America in the *Ranger*. The *Drake* was a shattered prize as yet unsold. Captain Jones was left in the humiliating position of an adventurer out of employment. He wrote to the Prince of Nassau, with the approval of Dr. Franklin, earnestly imploring a commission under the French flag. In his letter he wrote :

“Suffer me not, I beseech, you to continue longer in this shameful inactivity. Such dishonor is worse to me than a thousand deaths. I have already lost the golden season, the summer, which, in war, is of

more value than all the rest of the year. I appear here as a person cast off and useless. When any one asks me what I purpose to do, I am unable to answer."

Dr. Franklin transmitted this letter, and wrote to Captain Jones: "Your letter was sent to the Prince of Nassau. I am confident that something will be done for you, though I do not yet know what. I sympathize with you in what I know you must suffer from your present inactivity; but have patience."

It was proposed that he should take command of a prize-ship taken from the English. Examining the ship, and finding that she sailed slow, and had but a feeble armament, he unqualifiedly rejected her. Writing to M. Chaumont, a wealthy French gentleman, who had great influence with the Government, he said:

"I wish to have no connection with any ship that does not sail fast. For I intend to go in harm's way. You know, I believe, that this is not every one's intention. Therefore buy a frigate that sails fast and that is sufficiently large to carry twenty-six or twenty-eight guns, not less than twelve-pounders, on one deck. I would rather be shot ashore than sent to sea in such things as the armed prizes I have described."

An offer was made by a wealthy merchant of Nantes, M. Montieu, to place Captain Jones in

a first-class ship, thoroughly armed, to proceed on a privateering expedition. He replied :

“ Were I in pursuit of profit, I should accept the offer without hesitation. But I am under such obligations to Congress that I cannot think myself my own master. And as a servant of the imperial republic of America, honored with the public approbation of my past services, I cannot, from my own authority or inclination, serve either myself or my best friends in any private line whatsoever, unless where the honor and interest of America is the premier object.”

War was now openly declared between France and England. The colonies could not furnish Captain Jones with a suitable frigate, and there were many French naval officers eager to take command of such ships as the king could furnish. Consequently the prospects of Captain Jones, notwithstanding his high reputation for both bravery and ability, were very dark. In this emergence, and consumed with the desire for active service, he wrote a letter to the king. In this letter, after a very truthful and very modest narrative of his past experience he says :

“ Thus have I been chained down to shameful inactivity for five months. I have lost the best season of the year, and such opportunities of serving my country and acquiring honor as I cannot again

**expect** during this war. And, to my infinite **morti-**  
**fication**, having no command, I am considered **every-**  
**where** as an officer cast off, and in disgrace for **secret**  
**reasons**.

“ Having written to Congress to reserve no com-  
mand for me in America, my sensibility is the more  
affected by this unworthy situation in the sight of  
your majesty’s fleet. Although I wish not to become  
my own panegyrist, I must beg your majesty’s per-  
mission to observe that I am not an adventurer in  
search of fortune, of which, thank God, I have a suf-  
ficiency.

“ When the American banners were first dis-  
played, I drew my sword in support of the violated  
dignity and rights of human nature. And both  
honor and duty prompt me steadfastly to continue  
the righteous pursuit, and to sacrifice to it not only  
my private enjoyments, but even life, if necessary. I  
must acknowledge that the generous praise which I  
have received from Congress and others, exceeds the  
merit of my past services, and therefore I the more  
ardently wish for future opportunities of testifying  
my gratitude by my activity.

“ As your majesty, by espousing the cause of  
America, has become the protector of the rights of  
human nature, I am persuaded that you will not **dis-**

regard my situation, nor suffer me to remain any longer in this insupportable disgrace."

This letter was enclosed in one to the Duchess of Chartres, with whom he was personally acquainted, and from whom he had received kind attentions. He besought her to present the letter to his majesty the king; which she did.

One day, chance threw into Captain Jones's hands an old almanac, containing *Poor Richard's Maxims*, by Doctor Franklin. In that curious medley of wit and wisdom, poor Richard is represented as saying :

"If you wish to have any business done faithfully and expeditiously, go and do it yourself. Otherwise, send some one."

The maxim impressed Jones deeply. He pondered it, and decided that he had acted very unwisely in writing so many letters, instead of going directly to court, and making personal solicitations. Immediately he set out for Versailles, in whose gorgeous palace the royal family and court were then residing. Such was the potency of his presence that in a few days, on the 4th of February, 1779, he received from M. De Sartine, the French Minister of Marine, the following exhilarating letter:

“**TO JOHN PAUL JONES, ESQ.,**

“**Commander of the American Navy in Europe.**

“**SIR—I** announce to you that, in consequence of the exposition I have laid before the king, of the distinguished manner in which you have served the United States, and of the entire confidence which your conduct has merited from Congress, his majesty has thought proper to place you in command of the ship *Duras*, of forty guns, at present at *I'Orient*. I am about, in consequence, to issue the necessary orders for the complete armament of that ship.

“The commission which was given you, at your departure from America, will authorize you to hoist the flag of the United States, and you will likewise make use of the authority which has been vested in you, to procure a crew of Americans. But as you may find difficulty in raising a sufficient number, the king permits you to levy volunteers, until you obtain men enough, in addition to those who will be necessary to sail the ship. It shall be my care to procure the necessary officers, and you may be assured that I shall contribute every aid in my power to promote the success of your enterprise.

“As soon as you are prepared for sea, you will set sail without waiting for any ulterior orders; and you will yourself select your own cruising ground,

**either** in the European or American seas, observing always to render me an exact account of each event, that may take place during your cruise, as often as you may enter any port under the dominion of the king.

No one can describe the satisfaction with which Captain Jones read this communication. Feeling that his success was due to the good advice which he had received from Poor Richard, he asked leave to give his ship that name, or as translated into French, the name of *Bon Homme Richard*. Captain Jones, in his grateful reply to the Minister of Marine, writes :

“ I take the earliest opportunity to offer you my sincere and grateful thanks, for so singular and honorable a mark of your confidence and approbation. Your having permitted me to alter the name of the ship, has given me a pleasing opportunity of paying a well-merited compliment to a great and good man to whom I am under obligations, and **who honours me with his friendship.**”

## CHAPTER V.

### *Cruise of the Bon Homme Richard.*

**Plans** of Lafayette.—Correspondence.—Humane Instructions of Franklin.—Proposed Invasion of England.—Sailing of the Squadron.—Conduct of Pierre Landais.—The Collision.—Adventures of the Cruise.—Insane Actions of Landais.—Plan for Capture.—Plan for the Capture of Leith and Edinburgh.

CAPTAIN JONES eagerly repaired to L'Orient to inspect his ship and prepare her for service. He found that she was adapted to mount a battery of eighteen-pounders. He then hastened to Bordeaux, to order the casting of the cannon. Lafayette was at that time in America, coöperating with the army under Washington. Congress built a frigate of thirty-six guns, which was named the Alliance, out of compliment to the recent alliance with France. Congress also, in expression of gratitude to France, appointed a French officer, Pierre Landais, in command of the frigate. The Alliance was sent out to France to coöperate with Captain Jones, and took Lafayette as a passenger.

The distinguished French marquis was well ac-



quainted with the reputation of Captain Jones, as a courteous and high-minded gentleman, as well as one of the bravest and most skilful of naval officers. He wished to join Jones in his projected expedition. In conference with Dr. Franklin, at Paris, it was decided that Lafayette should embark in the fleet with a land force of seven hundred picked men, over whom he was to have the supreme control. Captain Jones was to have the undivided naval command. The Alliance, which was a very fine and fast frigate, was to be joined to his squadron. In reference to this contemplated expedition, Dr. Franklin addressed a letter to Captain Jones, containing the following judicious counsel :

“ The Marquis de la Fayette will soon be with you. It has been observed, that joint expeditions of land and sea forces often miscarry, through jealousies and misunderstandings between the officers of the different corps. This must happen where there are little minds, actuated more by personal views of profit or honor to themselves, than by the warm and sincere desire of good to their country. Knowing you both, as I do, I am confident that nothing of the kind can happen between you. I look upon this expedition only as an introduction to greater trusts and more extensive commands, and as a kind of trial of both your abilities, and of your fit-

ness in temper and disposition for acting in concert with others.

“As this is understood to be an American expedition under the Congressional commission and colors, the Marquis, who is a major-general in that service, has of course, the step in point of rank, and he must have command of the land forces, which are committed by the king to his care. But the command of the ships will be entirely in you, in which I am persuaded that whatever authority his rank might, in strictness, give him, he will not have the least desire to interfere with you. The circumstance is indeed a little unusual. For there is not only a junction of land and sea forces, but there is also a junction of Frenchmen and Americans, which increases the difficulty of maintaining a good understanding. A cool, prudent conduct in the chief, is therefore the more necessary, and I trust, neither of you will, in that respect, be deficient.”

The following instructions were also added to the letter. But when Dr. Franklin subsequently heard of the burning of Fairfield and other towns in America, and of the fiend-like cruelties which the English officers were authorizing, he was doubtful whether the circumstances did not demand more severe retaliation.

“As many of your officers and people have re-

cently escaped from English prisons, you are to be particularly attentive to their conduct toward the prisoners which the fortune of war may throw into your hands, lest the resentment of the more than barbarous usage by the English in many places toward the Americans, should occasion a retaliation and imitation of what ought rather to be detested and avoided for the sake of humanity and for the honor of our country.

“Although the English have wantonly burnt many defenceless towns in America, you are not to follow this example, unless when a reasonable ransom is refused ; in which case, your own generous feelings, as well as this instruction, will induce you to give timely notice of your intention, that sick and ancient persons, women and children, may be first removed.”

In reply to this communication, Captain Jones wrote : “ The letter I had the honor to receive from you to-day, together with your liberal and noble-minded instructions, would make a coward brave. You have called up every sentiment of public virtue in my breast, and it shall be my pride and ambition, in the strict pursuit of your instructions, to deserve success.

“ Be assured, that very few prospects could afford me so true a satisfaction as that of rendering some

acceptable service to the common cause, and at the same time of relieving from captivity, by furnishing the means of exchange, our unfortunate fellow-subjects, from the hands of the enemy."

Captain Jones then wrote to Lafayette: "So flattering and affectionate a proof of your esteem and friendship has made an impression on my mind that will attend me while I live. This I hope to prove by more than words. Where men of fine feelings are concerned there is seldom misunderstanding. And I am sure that I should do violence to my sensibility if I were capable of giving you a moment's pain by any part of my conduct. Therefore, without any apology, I shall expect you to point out my errors, when we are together alone, with perfect freedom; and I think I dare promise you your reproof shall not be lost. I have received from the good Dr. Franklin instructions at large, which it will give me the truest satisfaction to execute."

Much to Captain Jones's disappointment this proposed coöperation with Lafayette was soon abandoned. Spain was preparing to unite with France and America against England. An invasion of the island of Great Britain, by the allies, was contemplated. Large forces were raised in the northern provinces of France, and marched to the coast, while general officers were named to conduct the

enterprise. Lafayette was appointed to command a portion of this army. In his letter to Jones, informing him of the change which the ministry had made in his plans, he wrote :

“I am only to tell you, my good friend, how sorry I feel not to be a witness of your success, abilities, and glory.”

The Richard was soon fitted for sea with a battery of forty guns ; six only of these were eighteen-pounders. The rest were of but twelve-pound calibre. There were three hundred and twenty-nine officers and privates on the muster-roll. The crew had been hastily gathered from American prisoners rescued from the English prisons, from French peasants, and from vagabond English sailors who were ready to enlist under any flag for the money. There were not more than thirty Americans among the crew.

Four other vessels composed the little squadron. The American frigate Alliance, of thirty-six guns, was under the command of the French officer, to whom we have before alluded, Pierre Landais. The conduct of this officer was so extraordinary that it can only be accounted for on the supposition that he was actually insane. The Pallas mounted thirty-two guns. It was a merchant-ship, purchased by the King of France and hastily fitted up at Nantes

The *Cerf* had eighteen guns, and the *Vengeance* twelve.

The state of affairs on board the *Alliance* was such that the frigate was no help, but rather a hindrance to the enterprise. The crew were in a state bordering on open mutiny. The first and second lieutenants had deserted. The captain and his other officers were in a state of open and shameful hostility, ready to cut each other's throats. The *Vengeance* was also a merchant vessel, very poorly prepared for battle. The *Cerf* was a fine cutter, and the only vessel in the squadron which was well fitted and manned.

Captain Jones, who ever sought the most heroic enterprises, had formed the bold plan of appalling England by the capture of the city of Liverpool. But the withdrawal of Lafayette and his land forces from the expedition rendered it necessary to abandon this all-important measure. The squadron was first employed in convoying a fleet of merchant vessels down the coast of France, a distance of about two hundred miles, from L'Orient to Bordeaux, and to drive all of the English cruisers out of the Bay of Biscay.

On the night of the 20th of June, Pierre Landais contrived to run the *Alliance* upon the *Richard*. He thus lost his own mizzen-mast, while he tore away

the head and bowsprit of the Richard. This pretended accident was probably intentional. It soon became evident that he would be glad to cripple the Richard, probably hoping that she would be sent back for repairs, and that he, instead of being a subordinate, might be intrusted with the supreme command of the expedition. Through all the confusion of the scene, when, in almost midnight darkness and on a stormy sea, both vessels were in imminent peril of being sunk, with all their crews, he behaved like a madman. It was attested, by the officers, in the trial which took place—

“That the captain of the Alliance did not take the steps in his power to prevent his ship from getting foul of the Richard; for instead of putting his helm aweather, and bearing up to make way for his commanding officer, which was his duty, he left the deck to load his pistols.”

The next day a British vessel hove in sight. Captain Jones found that the Richard proved to be a lumbering concern and a slow sailer. He therefore sent the swifter-winged cutter *Cerf* in pursuit of the stranger. It will be remembered that the *Cerf* carried but eighteen guns. The vessel proved to be a war-sloop of fourteen guns. A warm engagement took place. The thunders of this naval tempest swept the ocean far and wide. The *Cerf* was

victorious. Grappling her battered and blood-stained prize, she was making her way back to the squadron when a large British frigate bore down upon her. The Cerf, maimed by the conflict, was compelled to abandon her prize, and escaping to the squadron, was sent back to L'Orient to refit.

The next day three British ships-of-war were discerned far away to the windward. Jones, with his four vessels, bore down upon them. The frigates, seeing that they were outnumbered, escaped by superior sailing. A few days after this there was a fog. Though Captain Jones fired signal guns, to keep his squadron together, when the fog cleared away neither the Alliance nor the Pallas was anywhere to be seen. Captain Jones was thus left with but two vessels; and his own, the Richard, was so seriously damaged by the collision with the Alliance, that it was needful to make port as speedily as possible, at L'Orient, for repairs.

When a few leagues from L'Orient, between Belle Isle and the Isle of Croix, he gave the Vengeance permission to run into the harbor while he moved slowly along with his disabled ship. Thus he was left alone. After the Vengeance had left him, in the night of the 31st of June, two British war-vessels attacked him. In his crippled state his vessel amounted to but little excepting a floating battery



But he served his guns so well and gave his foes so warm a reception, that they speedily retired.

"They appeared at first," writes Jones, "earnest to engage, but their courage failed, and they fled with precipitation, and to my mortification out-sailed the Bon Homme Richard and got clear."

The Richard had proved a failure. Upon inspection at L'Orient, she was pronounced to be unworthy of the great alterations essential to fit her for a successful campaign. The ship was, however, tinkered up for temporary service, and again Captain Jones was sent forth to cruise in the Channel, with a small squadron, under circumstances which would have disheartened any man of ordinary temperament.

At daybreak on the 14th of August, 1779, the vessels weighed anchor from the harbor of L'Orient. The squadron consisted of the same vessels which had sailed before, and all of which had rendezvoused at L'Orient. Two French privateers also sailed in company, the Monsieur and the Granville. When four days out, on the 18th, the fleet came in sight of a large French ship which had been captured by an English privateer. A British crew was hurrying with the prize to the nearest British port. The squadron gave chase, and the prize was overtaken and recaptured by the swift-sailing privateer Monsieur. This fine ship carried forty guns.

The privateersman assumed that the prize was his own property, to which the squadron had no claim. He therefore, in the night, dropping astern, took from the prize such articles as he needed, and placed a portion of his crew and one of his own officers on board to hold possession. But Captain Jones promptly reversed this decision, and sent the prize, under his own orders, to L'Orient, to be disposed of in accordance with the laws provided for such an occasion. The captain of the *Monsieur* was so displeased with his manifestly just decision, that the next day he separated from the squadron.

Two days after, on the 20th of August, another large ship was caught sight of, far away to the windward. The squadron gave chase, but the ship escaped. The next day another ship was seen in the distant horizon, and pursued. But being to the windward, she also escaped. While engaged in the chase, one of the squadron overtook a brig laden with provisions, bound for London. She was easily captured, and under a prize crew was sent into L'Orient.

On the 23d, the squadron was in sight of Cape Clear, the extreme southwestern point of Ireland. Scarcely a breath of wind rippled the mirrored surface of the sea. The sails flapped idly against the masts as the vessels gently rolled on the vast ocean swells.

**F**ar away in the northwest a brig was seen. The calm prevented any advance of the squadron. Captain Jones sent two large boats, well manned, and propelled by oars, to capture the vessel.

The afternoon wore away, and as evening came on it was perceived that a strong ocean current was sweeping the Richard into a very dangerous position, between two rocks, called the Skallocks and the Blaskets. The captain sent out his own barge, with strong rowers, to tow the ship from her dangerous course. About one-third of the crew were English sailors. The best men had been sent off in the boats to capture the brig. He had therefore to man his barge mainly with the English. They were unprincipled adventurers, and when night came on they cut the tow-rope, and pulled for the shore.

The evening was clear and serene. Mr. Trent, who occupied the position of sailing-master on board the Richard, immediately sprang into another of the ship's boats, with a few armed men, and pursued the deserters. At the same time several cannon-shot were unavailingly thrown at them. A fog came on, and the pursuing boat was lost in the darkness. The deserters reached the shore and escaped. The fog continued, a genuine English fog, until noon of the next day. The boats sent to capture the brig

were successful. The crews under the command of the lieutenant took possession of the prize.

The *Cerf* was sent to reconnoitre the coast, and to endeavor to recover the two lost boats, the barge and the boat sent in pursuit of it. Approaching near the shore, the *Cerf*, to avoid detection, raised English colors. Mr. Trent, catching sight of the hostile flag, fearing capture, ran his boat ashore, where he and his crew were made prisoners. They were thrown into a wretched dungeon, where the unhappy Mr. Trent lingered until death came to his relief.

Thus the *Richard* lost two important boats. In the afternoon, Pierre Landais came on board the *Richard*, and, even assuming an arrogant air of superiority, affirmed, in a very insulting manner, that Captain Jones had lost two boats and their crews from his folly in sending boats to capture a brig. He erroneously supposed that the lost boats were the two which had first been sent out; whereas they had been entirely successful, and had triumphantly accomplished their mission. Captain Jones listened calmly to his impertinent tirade, and then, with the courtesy of a true gentleman, replied:

"It is not true," Captain Landais, "that the boats which are lost, are the two which were sent to capture the brig."

The irate Frenchman, almost insane with pas-

sion, whirled upon his heel, and exclaimed, to an officer who accompanied him, "He tells me *I lie*."

The gestures of Landais were as rude and insulting as his language. Lieutenants Weibert and Chamillard endeavored to soothe the unreasonably angry man. But all was in vain. He raved like a maniac. Through all this scene, so disgraceful to the Frenchman, Captain Jones maintained a tranquil spirit. The conduct of Landais was so violent and so utterly unreasonable, that Captain Jones charitably excused him, on the supposition that there was a vein of insanity in his nature.

The *Cerf* was utterly lost in the fog. The next night a violent storm arose, and the cutter, finding itself hopelessly separated from the squadron, returned to France. The privateer *Granville*, which mounted fourteen guns, having secured a prize, hastened with it back to a French port. The moderation displayed by Captain Jones under annoyances sufficient to drive most men mad, is worthy of all praise. In his journal for the king he wrote:

"It was my intention to cruise off the southwest coast of Ireland for twelve or fifteen days, in order to intercept the enemy's homeward-bound East India ships. I had been informed that they would return without convoy, and would steer for that point of land. But Captain Landais, of the *Alliance*,

began to speak and act as though he were **not** under my command. He made great objections to remaining on the coast, expressing apprehension that the enemy would send a superior force."

On the evening of the 26th, as a violent storm was raging, Landais refused to obey the signal from the Richard, and altering his course, was not seen again for five days. The Pallas also, in the fearful gale, lost her rudder, and became in a great degree unmanageable. When the morning of the 27th of August dawned luridly upon the tempest-lashed ocean, the Bon Homme Richard found herself alone with the Vengeance.

On the 31st of August, as the Richard and the Vengeance were in hot chase of an English privateer, mounting twenty-two guns, the Alliance, by chance, again appeared in sight. They were then off the extreme northwestern coast of Ireland, within sight of the Hebrides. They had run along the western shore of Ireland. The Alliance had captured a valuable prize, bound from Liverpool to Jamaica. The Richard and Vengeance soon overtook the vessel they were pursuing, and captured it, almost without a struggle. It proved to be the **Union**, bound from London for Quebec. It had a **cargo** of great value, consisting of sails, rigging

anchors, cables, and other essential articles, for the war-vessels England was building on the lakes.

Captain Jones, having manned from his crew the brig which he captured off the northwest of Ireland, and having lost the deserters who filled the barge, and twenty of his best men who were sent in pursuit of them, probably could not well spare enough men to man the guns of the prize, so as to take her into some safe port. Landais sent the following insulting message to Captain Jones :

“Do you wish to furnish men to carry the prize you have taken to port, or do you wish me to furnish men. If it is your wish that I should take charge of the prize, I shall not allow any boat or any individual from the Bon Homme Richard to go near her.”

Captain Jones was very anxious, for the honor of our country, and for the success of the cause of American liberty, to avoid all jealousies and bickerings with our allies the French. He therefore, in a spirit of exalted patriotism, endured indignities, which, under other circumstances it would not have been his duty to tolerate. With noble forbearance he replied that Captain Landais might take the exclusive charge of the prize. In his journal for the ~~king~~ he wrote :

“Ridiculous as this appeared to me, I yielded to

it for the sake of peace; and received the prisoners on board the Bon Homme Richard, while the prize was manned from the Alliance."

It was needful for Captain Jones to make this statement, in consequence of the result which ensued. The half-crazed Landais, instead of sending the prizes directly home to some port in France, probably fearing that they might be captured by some English war-ship, despatched them to Bergen, in Norway. The Danish Government, being on friendly terms with England, gave them both up to the British ambassador. Landais pursued this strange course in direct violation of the order he had received from Jones. The value of the two prizes, thus foolishly lost, was estimated to exceed two hundred thousand dollars.

In the afternoon of the same day another large ship appeared in the horizon, near the Flamie Islands. As we have said, the Richard was a lumbering merchantman of slow speed. The Alliance was a finely built, swift-footed American frigate. Jones signalled the Alliance to aid him in the pursuit by immediately giving chase. Instead of obeying the commands of the appointed commodore of the squadron, he deliberately wore ship, and laid his course in the opposite direction. Night came. The stranger escaped. In the morning, Captain Jones signalled



Landais to come on board the *Richard*. He wished to confer respecting more cordial coöperation. Landais contemptuously paid no regard to the signal.

The next morning, which was the 2d of September, daylight revealed a sail in the distance. The *Richard* and the *Vengeance* gave chase, followed sullenly by the *Alliance*. The ship proved to be the *Pallas*, which had, in some way, succeeded in repairing the loss of her rudder. A rendezvous had been appointed, in case the fleet should get separated, at Fair Island, north of Scotland. The squadron turned its course in that direction hoping to find the *Cerf* there. On the evening of the next day, September 3d, the *Vengeance* captured a small brig returning to England from Norway. The *Alliance* had disappeared. It had gone, no one knew where. The terrible annoyances to which Captain Jones was exposed, in ways innumerable, may be inferred from the following extracts from his journal:

“On the morning of the 4th the *Alliance* appeared again, and had brought two very small coasting sloops in ballast, but without having attended properly to my order of yesterday. The *Vengeance* joined me soon after, and informed me that, in consequence of Captain Landais’ orders to the commanders of the two prize-ships, they had refused to follow him to the rendezvous. I am, to this moment

ignorant of what orders these men received from Captain Landais; nor know I by virtue of what authority he ventured to give his orders to prizes in my presence, and without either my knowledge or approbation. Captain Ricot further informed me that he had burnt the brigantine, because that vessel proved leaky. And I was sorry to understand afterward that, though the vessel was Irish property, the cargo was the property of subjects of Norway.

“In the evening I sent for all the captains to come on board the *Bon Homme Richard*, to consult on future plans of operations. Captains Cottineau and Ricot obeyed me; but Captain Landais obstinately refused, and after sending me various uncivil messages, wrote me a very extraordinary letter, in answer to a written order which I had sent him on finding that he had trifled with my verbal orders.”

Three of the officers of the other ships, gallant officers and courteous gentlemen, Messrs. Mease, Cottineau, and Chamillard, went on board the *Alliance* to endeavor to persuade Landais not to pursue a course so ruinous to the efficiency of the expedition. The angry man would not listen to the voice of reason. He spoke of Captain Jones in the most contemptuous and insulting terms. He even went so far as to say:

**"I will soon meet Captain Jones on shore. Then I will either kill him or he shall kill me."**

On the afternoon of the 5th of September, a storm arose. For four days one of the fiercest of gales ploughed the seas of those high northern latitudes; for the squadron was then in the parallel of northern Labrador. In the second night of the gale the Alliance again disappeared, though there was nothing to prevent the vessels of the squadron from keeping in sight of each other. The Vengeance and the Pallas alone remained with the Richard.

The squadron followed down the eastern coast of Scotland far out at sea. Their first sight of land revealed the summits of the Cheviot Hills, far away in the south. This was in the evening of the 13th. The next day they gave chase to several vessels and succeeded in capturing a large ship and a brig, both laden with coal, some distance off the frith or bay of Edinburgh.

The city of Leith is the seaport of the city of Edinburgh, which stands about a mile back from the bay. Leith contained a population of about twenty-five thousand, and its harbor was crowded with shipping. Captain Jones learned, from his prizes, that there was no land battery to defend Leith, and that there was, in the harbor, in addition to the ordinary shipping, an armed vessel of twenty guns, and three

fine cutters. Captain Jones, always eager for heroic measures, and whose courage, extraordinary as it was, was ever tempered by discretion, seeing both Leith and Edinburgh within reach of his blows and reposing in indolence and supposed security, desired to make an instantaneous attack. He summoned Captain Cottineau of the *Pallas* and Captain Chamillard of the *Vengeance* to meet in his cabin. As he opened his bold plan to them they were appalled at the idea of attacking, with three small vessels, Leith, and consequently Edinburgh, which would instantly send all her forces to the rescue. Captain Jones eloquently urged upon the French officers the motives which influenced his own mind.

“It is,” he said, “a matter of the utmost importance to teach the enemy humanity by some exemplary stroke of retaliation. And there is no way in which we can release from the most cruel captivity the American prisoners in England, but by making captives of some persons of note. The aristocratic Government of Great Britain will care but little for the fate of their poor sailors and fishermen.

“Moreover, the Allies are soon to make a formidable descent on the south side of England. It will greatly help their operations if we can make a diversion here in the north. The bold measure will

alarm them. They will imagine that an immense force is to follow into the Bay of Edinburgh. This will compel them to hurry their armies to the north, leaving the south unprotected.

“And bold as the measure appears to be, it is by no means quixotic. There is every reason to expect success. We know just what resistance we have to encounter. We have ample means to overcome that resistance. And should any unforeseen calamity thwart our plans, we can promptly put to sea, and there are no vessels at hand which will dare to pursue us.”

Thus he argued all the night, but unavailingly. Objections and difficulties were presented without number. There was perhaps never more unselfish patriotism than that which glowed in the bosom of Paul Jones. The idea of his own personal interest being promoted by the plunder he should take, seemed never to have entered his mind. It would have been unreasonable to expect that such purity of motive could govern the French officers. They were merely the allies of America, and, in the war, had no important national interests at stake. Captain Jones then appealed to another motive.

“The cities of Leith and Edinburgh will readily give a million of dollars to ransom their two cities from the flames.”

A million of dollars! two hundred thousand pounds. This thought touched and melted their hearts. All opposition gave way. They were now ready to coöperate, with all the zeal which mercenary instincts could inspire.

## CHAPTER VI.

### *The Bon Homme Richard and the Serapis.*

**Leith Threatened.—The Summons.—Remarkable Prayer.—Wide spread Alarm.—Continuation of the Cruise.—Insubordination of Landais.—Successive Captures.—Terrible Battle between the Bon Homme Richard and the Serapis.—The Great Victory.**

UNFORTUNATELY so much time had been spent in convincing the captains of the *Pallas* and the *Vengeance* of the feasibility of an attack upon Leith, that the golden hour of success was lost. As the little fleet of three vessels was sailing up the wide Frith of Forth, and were abreast of Inchkeith Island, within ten or twelve miles of Leith, and which island is at the entrance of the harbor, the success of the enterprise seemed certain. It was the morning of the seventeenth. In an hour the vessels would have been within cannon-shot of the town. Everything was ready for the descent. Every preparation was made for the landing of troops under Lieutenant-Colonel Chamillard. The summons to the chief magistrate was written. It was characteristic of the humanity and energy of Captain Jones.

"I do not wish," he wrote, "to distress the poor inhabitants. My intention is only to demand your contribution toward the reimbursement which Britain owes to the much injured citizens of America. Savages would blush at the unmanly violation and rapacity that have marked the tracks of British tyranny in America, from which neither virgin innocence nor helpless age has been a plea of protection or pity.

"Leith and its port now lay at our mercy. And did not the plea of humanity stay the just hand of retaliation, I should, without advertisement, lay it in ashes. Before I proceed to that stern duty as an officer, my duty as a man induces me to propose to you, by means of a reasonable ransom, to prevent such a scene of horror and distress. For this reason I have authorized Lieutenant-Colonel de Chamillard to agree with you on the terms of ransom, allowing you exactly half an hour's reflection before you finally accept or reject the terms which he shall propose."

The alarm had reached Leith, and was running along the thronged streets of Edinburgh. All was hurry and confusion. Crowds were assembled on the beach, and were rushing to all the commanding heights in the neighborhood. On the northern shore of the bay was the thriving little town of Kirkaldy. The three vessels passed within a mile



of the town. It was the morning of the Sabbath. Nearly all of the little community were at church. Alarmed by the near approach of the squadron, they made a general rush to the beach, accompanied by their pastor, the Rev. Mr. Shavra. He was a man of great eccentricity, and particularly remarkable for the familiarity with which he was accustomed to address the Deity. Standing upon the beach, with uncovered head and uplifted hands, and surrounded by his reverent flock, it is said that he offered, in broad Scotch, the following extraordinary prayer. It was not extraordinary to them, or irreverent, for they had ever been accustomed to such utterances.

“Now, dear Lord, dinna ye think it a shame for ye to send this vile pirate to rob our folk o’ Kirkaldy. Ye ken that they are puir enow already, and hae naething to spare. The way the wind blaws he’ll be here in a jiffy. And wha kens what he may do? He’s nae too good for onything. Mickle’s the mischief he has dune already. He’ll burn their hooses, tak their very claes, and strip them to the sark. And, waes me, wha kens but that the bluidy villain might tak their lives! The puir weemen are most frightened out of their wits, and the bairns screeching after them. I canna think of it! I canna think of it!

“I have long been a faithful servant to ye, O

**Lord.** But gin ye dinna turn the wind about and blaw the scoundrel out of our gate I'll nae stir a foot; but will just sit here till the tide comes. Sae tak your will o't."

Suddenly a violent gale arose, blowing out from the harbor. The people of Kirkcaldy never doubted that it was in consequence of the powerful intercession of their pastor. "I prayed," said the good old man often afterward, "but the Lord sent the wind." The gale was so violent that it was impossible to make any headway against it. The ship which he had captured, freighted with coal, had her seams so opened by the tornado that she sank to the bottom. It was with the greatest difficulty that the crew was rescued. Though Jones was almost within gun-shot of Leith, after an ineffectual struggle with the gale he was obliged to bear away and run out of the Frith.

In the morning, the storm abated and the weather fair, Captain Jones was anxious to return immediately to the attack. But the other captains were unwilling to run the risk. In conference they said :

The alarm of our approach has spread throughout the whole country. The inhabitants of Leith have had several hours to prepare to repel us. The city of Edinburgh will certainly have sent all its

military force into Leith. British men-of-war are all along the coast. They will be immediately informed of our presence. Unless we disappear we shall be overwhelmed by numbers. We dare not remain here. If Captain Jones decides to do so, we must leave him."

It may seem very strange that Captain Jones, who was the commodore of the fleet, should not have had the power to *command* in such a case. But he was crippled, and his energies almost paralyzed, by instructions, which, through the address of Landais, had been given to him by the French Minister of Marine the evening before he sailed.

By this singular document, called a *concordat*, the five captains, Jones, Landais, Cottineau, Varage, and Ricot, were bound to act together. This seemed to make them colleagues, without any supreme head. This unfortunate order, in a military point of view, was an absurdity—as absurd as to order the commander-in-chief of an army first to obtain the approval of all his generals before ordering any important movement. To this wretched concordat Captain Jones justly attributed nearly all his troubles. Landais, from the beginning, assumed that he was the *colleague* of Jones.

The intrepid Captain Jones could only argue the point with his officers. He said :

“ We know that there are no batteries to oppose us. There is no naval force in the harbor which we cannot instantly silence. The wind is such that we can run in and out of the harbor at our pleasure. No matter how many thousand men stand on the shore with their muskets, they cannot harm us. From the harbor we can throw our broadsides of shot into the crowded city, and in a short time lay it in ashes. We can also destroy all the shipping. Rather than submit to this terrible loss, they will promptly pay the ransom we demand. Thus, in all probability, we have only to sail into the harbor, receive the ransom, and go on our way.”

These were strong arguments. They show that Captain Jones was not a reckless desperado. His plans were maturely considered. Those of his enterprises which appeared most desperate were sanctioned by the decisions of sound judgment. His arguments were unavailing; and he was compelled to yield. In his official account, he says, in mild language, which commands our respect for the man :

“ I am persuaded even now that I should have succeeded. And to the honor of my young officers, I found them as ardently disposed to the business as I could desire. Nothing prevented me from pursuing my design, but the reproach that would have been cast upon my character, as a man of prudence

had the enterprise miscarried. It would have been said: Was he not warned by Captain Cottineau, and others?"

The Alliance having disappeared, there were now but two vessels, the Pallas and the Vengeance, accompanying the Richard. This little fleet continued its course in a southerly direction along the eastern coast of Scotland. On the 19th, three vessels were captured, which were of but little worth. The next day three more were taken. One of them, Captain Cottineau, contrary to orders, ransomed. The others were either retained or sunk. On the 21st, when off Flamborough Head, a remarkably bold English promontory jutting out from the Yorkshire coast, two vessels appeared in sight, one in the northeast, and the other in the southwest. The Bon Homme Richard and the Vengeance pursued, the one in the southwest, while the Pallas was sent in chase of the other. Captain Jones overtook the one he chased. It was a brig in ballast. As a large fleet was then discovered between Flamborough Head and Spurn Head, another remarkable promontory about thirty miles farther south, Captain Jones sunk the brig, and pressed forward in pursuit of the fleet. While eagerly engaged in the chase. night came on. He had, however, got so near one vessel of the fleet as to compel her to run ashore.

As the twilight faded away he overtook and captured a brig. The night was long and dark. The affrighted vessels improved every moment in running into such harbors as could be reached.

The dawn of the next day revealed another fleet rounding the point of Spurn Head. This fleet was convoyed by apparently a single armed ship. The achievements of Captain Jones's little fleet had, by this time, spread alarm everywhere. As soon as the fleet caught sight of the Richard and the Vengeance, though there was nothing to distinguish these vessels from others of the innumerable ships which were ever traversing the Channel, suspicions were aroused, and the whole fleet turned to, and fled back into the river Humber, as fast as their wings could bear them.

Captain Jones ran the English flag to the mast-head of the Bon Homme Richard, and signalled for a pilot. Soon two pilot-boats came off. The pilots supposed the Richard to be an English man-of-war. They were consequently unreserved in their communications. They informed Captain Jones that the fleet, which had run back into the Humber, was convoyed only by an armed merchant-ship, and that a king's frigate was at anchor within the mouth of the river, waiting to convoy another fleet of merchant-ships to the north. The pilots also communicated

to him the private signal they were required to make.

With this signal Captain Jones endeavored to decoy the frigate out of the harbor. The frigate spread its sails, and would soon have been within the grasp of its foes, had not the wind changed ; which, with a strong, unfavorable tide, compelled the ship to return. The entrance of the Humber is difficult and dangerous. Captain Jones did not deem it prudent, with only one assistant, to attempt an attack upon the shipping there. The Pallas was not in sight. He therefore turned his course north, to meet the Pallas, by previous agreement, off Flam-borough Head.

In the night, Captain Jones saw two ships. It was bright moonlight, and he gave them chase. Thinking it possible that one might be the Pallas, he made the private signal of recognizance, which had been communicated to each captain before the fleet sailed. He was bewildered by having one-half of the answer only returned from one of the vessels. Thus embarrassed, he lay to till daylight, when the ships proved to be the Pallas and the Alliance. It is probable that the Pallas was too far distant to discern the signal by moonlight ; and that the ambiguous answer returned was one of the mad pranks of Landais.

On the morning of the 23d they gave chase to a brig, which appeared at some distance to the windward. At noon, while engaged in this chase, a large ship appeared coming round the Head. Captain Jones had seized both of the swift-sailing pilot-boats. One of them he armed and sent in pursuit of the brig. Accompanied by the Vengeance he sailed in chase of the ship. The ship ran for protection into Burlington Bay. But just then there hove in sight, far away in the north of Flamborough Head, a fleet of forty-one merchant-ships. It was very certain that such a fleet would not be without a strong convoy.

Captain Jones immediately signalled back the pilot-boat, and also hung out the signal for a general chase. As soon as the fleet discovered the squadron bearing down upon them, suspecting that it was the terrible Captain Jones, the merchant-ships, like frightened pigeons, crowded all sail toward the shore. There were then six vessels composing Captain Jones's squadron, the Richard, the Alliance, the Vengeance, the Pallas, and the two pilot-boats.

It was soon found that there were two ships-of-war protecting the merchant fleet. These two, the Serapis and the Countess of Scarborough, two of the most strongly built and best armed of English frigates, came steadily forward, preparing for battle.



Captain Jones made signal for all his ships to form in line of battle, and crowded all sail to reach the enemy as soon as possible, for night was at hand. Captain Landais paid no attention to the signal.

It was seven o'clock in the evening when the *Bon Homme Richard* and the *Serapis* approached within hailing distance of each other. The *Alliance* stood sullenly aloof from the conflict. The *Vengeance*, for some unexplained reason, remained far to the windward, and did not come into action. She had been commanded to assist in any way she could in the battle, or in taking or destroying the merchant-ships. The *Pallas*, under Captain Cottineau, bore down bravely upon the *Countess of Scarborough*, and after the bloody conflict of an hour compelled the white cross of St. George to bow to the Stars and the Stripes of the almost nameless republic. Thus the *Richard* was left alone to contend with the *Serapis*.

The *Richard* had forty guns. Six of these were eighteen-pounders. The rest were twelve, nine, and six pounders. Three hundred and seventy-five men served these guns. The whole weight of iron balls she could throw at one discharge of them all, was four hundred and seventy-four pounds.

The *Serapis* carried forty-one guns. Twenty of these were eighteen-pounders. There were three

hundred and twenty-five men to work these guns. The whole weight of metal the Serapis could throw, at one discharge, was six hundred pounds.

The Serapis was one of the finest of British frigates, agile and very obedient to her helm. The Richard was an old and clumsy merchantman, very unwieldy, and poorly fitted for warfare. There was a gentle breeze which swelled the sails, and an almost unrippled sea. The sun had been set for more than a hour. But the moon rose in full splendor, and, shining down from a cloudless sky, shed almost noonday brilliance over the scene. The vessels were but three miles from the rugged cliffs of Flamborough, which seems but a short distance when looked upon over the water. Those cliffs were blackened with the multitudes who had hurried to witness the strange, sublime, and yet awful spectacle. The coast line and the piers of Scarborough seemed also to be crowded with spectators.

The breeze was so light that the vessels had approached each other very slowly. When within pistol-shot, and abreast, with bow to bow, the Serapis hailed the Richard with the question:

“What ship is that?”

The answer came back, “What is it you say?”

Again the shout came from the Serapis, “What

ship is that? Answer immediately, or I shall fire into you."

Simultaneously both vessels opened their broadsides. The flash glared upon the spectators like lightning from the cloud. Then came the thunder peal. The storm of human passion, more dreadful than any storm which ever wrecked the skies, had begun. The iron hail tore through both of the ships, crashing the timbers, scattering death-dealing splinters in all directions, and strewing the decks with the mangled bodies of the dying and the dead. At this first discharge two of the eighteen-pounders of the Richard burst, killing almost every man who served them, and so blowing up the deck and creating such havoc as to render the remaining four useless.

Thus Captain Jones's battery of six eighteen-pounders was rendered entirely useless, while his adversary had twenty eighteen-pounders to hurl destruction upon the Richard. The battle was continued with unremitting fury. Broadside followed broadside in such swift succession that there was a continuous flash and a continuous roar.

It was a wondrous spectacle presented to the spectators on land. Both ships were enveloped in such a cloud of smoke as to be quite invisible. It seemed as though a thunder-cloud, fraught with the

most dreadful tempests, had descended upon the ocean, and that a supernatural strife was raging there between unseen spirits of darkness, who hurled bolts at each other which illumined the ocean, and shook the hills. All who witnessed the terrific scene were overwhelmed with emotions of awe and dread. This is indeed a fallen world. Through all the ages, on the ocean and on the land, man has been combining all the energies he could wield for the destruction of his brother man.

Very slowly this war cloud moved along, the manœuvres of both vessels being entirely concealed from those on the shore. Each was constantly endeavoring to cross each other's track, that thus the ship of its opponent might be raked by a broadside which would sweep from the bows to the stern. But several of the braces of the Richard were shot away; she would not readily mind the helm, and the bowsprit of the Serapis was thrust across the stern of the Richard, near the mizzen-mast.

Captain Jones grasped the bowsprit with his grappling irons, and made the ships fast. The stern of the Serapis swung round to the bows of the Richard. Thus the ships were brought square alongside of each other. Their yards were all entangled. The muzzles of their guns often touched. In the meantime the gunners were pouring into each other their

awful broadsides, creating destruction which was truly appalling. Several eighteen-pound shots had pierced the Richard at the water's edge, and the water was rushing in torrents through the openings.

A party of twenty soldiers had been placed upon the quarter-deck of the Richard, to pick off the gunners of the enemy, with their muskets. But they were assailed by such a murderous storm of grape-shot, that torn and bleeding, and leaving many dead upon the deck, they ran below. Men were stationed high up in the rigging of both the ships, who kept up an incessant fire upon all exposed persons.

The two vessels, sometimes touching each other and again separated by but a few feet, moved slowly along, side by side, dealing such terrific blows as to cause each to stagger. They often crossed each other's track, now passing the bow and again the stern. Captain Jones's battery of twelve-pounders, upon which he had placed his main reliance, was soon entirely silenced. As in this terrible struggle broadside answered broadside, Captain Jones saw that the superiority of his enemy in weight of metal would inevitably give him the victory, if that mode of warfare were continued; especially as his own vessel was old and easily torn to pieces by the foe-man's shot, while the Serapis was new, with solid

timbers almost like ribs of steel. He resolved to board the foe.

In attempting this his vessel became entangled with the jib-boom of the *Serapis* and tore it away. The grappling irons were again thrown out, and the two ships again swung together, broadside to broadside, so that the muzzles of their guns not unfrequently touched, and the gunners, in ramming down the charges, often ran their ramrods into the port-holes of their adversary. With his own hand Captain Jones aided in tying the lashings, that the vessels might not again be separated. Still there was not a moment's cessation of the cannonading. The timbers were torn and rent. Huge gaps were opened in the sides of each ship. The cloud of smoke which enveloped them was so dense that the combatants, in almost midnight darkness, fought mainly by the flash of their guns.

A hundred men made a rush over the gunwales into the *Serapis* with gleaming swords, exploding pistols, and the loudest outcries which frenzy could extort. In such hours of blood and terror, shrieks aid to embolden the heart and nerve the arm. They were met by an equal number of the foe, with pike, sabre, pistol, and corresponding yells. What imagination can conceive the scene? In midnight darkness, illumined only by war's portentous flashes

enveloped in sulphurous smoke, with the crash as of ten thousand thunders deafening the ear, more than seven hundred men, crowded together in closest contact, and wielding the most powerful weapons modern art could construct were butchering each other. Limb was torn from limb. Dead bodies strewed the decks, which were slippery with blood. Shrieks and groans and prayers and oaths were blended with the horrid clamor. Can hell itself present a scene more infernal than this.

And who shall answer for this at God's bar? If Abraham was right in arming three hundred and eighteen men to pursue the savages for the rescue of his nephew Lot, and his family, and if he could look for God's blessing upon the enterprise, as he certainly could, then were these colonies justified in resisting, even to this direful extremity, the attempts of haughty England to enslave our land. The burglar who breaks into the peaceful dwelling at midnight, to rob and murder, may be justly resisted with every weapon which frenzy can grasp. The British government must answer at the Judgment Seat, for these scenes of blood and woe. Truly did Captain Jones write to Lady Selkirk.

"Humanity starts back from such scenes of horror, and cannot sufficiently execrate the vile promoters of the detestable war.

*"For they; 'twas they unsheathed the ruthless blade,  
And Heaven shall ask the havoc it has made."*

The boarders were driven back. Leaving many dead upon the deck of the Serapis, they were forced, pell-mell, over the gunwales, with many a gory wound, to the blood-stained decks of the Richard. As they fled, the two captains, each on his quarter-deck, stood within a few feet of each other. In the darkness the flags could not be seen. Captain Pearson, of the Serapis, shouted out :

"Have you struck your flag?"

"No," responded Captain Jones, "I have not yet begun to fight." With his own hands the intrepid captain worked, serving the guns. Though blackened with powder and smoke, and painfully wounded by a splinter, he was calm and unagitated, watching every movement, but with a firm expression on his almost feminine features which indicated that he would never, never yield. He endeavored to compensate for the superiority of the guns of his foe by the rapidity of his own fire. His guns thus became greatly heated, and in their terrible rebound threatened to break from their fastenings. At every discharge his ship trembled from stem to stern. In Captain Jones's extremely modest official account, in which not one word is said in praise of himself, he writes :



“ I directed the fire of one of the three cannon against the main-mast with double-headed shot, while the other two were exceedingly well served with grape and canister shot to silence the enemy’s musketry, and clear her decks, which was at last effected. The enemy were, as I have since understood, on the instant for calling for quarter, when the cowardice or treachery of three of my under officers induced them to call to the enemy. The English commodore asked me if I demanded quarter, and, I having answered him in the most determined negative, they renewed the battle with double fury. They were unable to stand the deck, but the fire of their cannon, especially the lower battery, which was entirely formed of eighteen-pounders, was incessant. Both ships were set on fire in various places, and the scene was dreadful beyond the reach of language. To account for the timidity of my three under officers (I mean the gunner, the carpenter, and the master-at-arms), I must observe that the two first were slightly wounded, and as the ship had received various shots under water, and one of the pumps being shot away, the carpenter expressed his fear that she would sink, and the other two concluded that she was sinking, which occasioned the gunner to run aft on the poop, without my knowledge, to strike the colors ; fortunately

for me, a cannon-ball had done that before, by carrying away the ensign staff; he was, therefore, reduced to the necessity of sinking—as he supposed—or of calling for quarter, and he preferred the latter.”

There were six feet of water in the hold. The flood, in streams, was rushing in. The ship was apparently sinking. At that awful moment one of the officers rushed below and, with humane intentions, released three hundred prisoners who were in the hold. They came pouring upon deck in a frenzy of dismay. Water would drown them in the hold. Bullets and cannon-balls would strike them on the deck. The *Richard* was on fire in several places. The rudder was cut off the stern-frame, and the transoms shot away. Fire had broken out in several places. It was burning within a few inches of the powder magazine. The timbers on the ship's side, from the main-mast to the stern, were entirely shot away, so that the balls of the *Serapis* passed directly through, meeting with no obstruction but the bodies of men. A few blackened posts alone prevented the upper deck from falling.

The flames were so near the magazine that Captain Jones ordered the powder kegs to be brought up and thrown into the sea. He compelled the prisoners to work at the pumps, and in the endeavor to

extinguish the flames. They were indeed ready enough to do this; for the sinking of the ship would drown them, and they were in imminent peril of being burned up by the conflagration.

In the midst of this awful confusion, after the battle had raged for two and a half hours, Captain Pearson thought he heard the cry of some one on board the Richard calling for quarter. This cry probably came from the quartermaster.

"Hearing this," Captain Pearson writes, "I called upon the captain, to know if he had struck. No answer being made, after repeating my words to or three times, I called for the boarders and ordered them to board; which they did. But the moment they were on board the Richard, they discovered a superior number, lying under cover, with pikes in their hands ready to receive them; on which our people retreated instantly to their guns again, till after ten o'clock."

The powder-boys of the Serapis, whose business it was to bring up the cartridges for the guns, appalled by the horrible scene, of dismounted guns, mutilation, and death, scarcely knowing what they did, threw the cartridges upon the deck, and went back for more. The cartridges were trampled upon and broken. The deck was soon quite covered with cartridges and loose powder. A hand grenade,

thrown from the Richard, set fire to this, and produced an awful explosion.

The effect was horrible. More than twenty were instantly blown to pieces. Many others had every particle of clothing blown from their bodies, and were thrown down, writhing in agony, blackened, and scorched almost to cinders, Captain Pearson, in his official report says :

“ A hand grenade, being thrown in at one of the lower ports a cartridge of powder was set on fire ; the flames of which, running from cartridge to cartridge all the way aft, blew up the whole of the people and officers that were quartered abaft the mainmast ; from which unfortunate circumstances, all those guns were rendered useless for the remainder of the action, and I fear that the greater part of the people will lose their lives.”

Just before ten oclock the Alliance, which had stood aloof during all these hours, made her appearance. I must give this extraordinary occurrence in the words of Captain Jones.

“ I now thought,” he wrote, “ that the battle was at an end. But to my utter astonishment he discharged a broadside full into the stern of the Bon Homme Richard. We called to him for God’s sake to forbear. Yet he passed along the off side of the ship, and continued firing. There was no possibil-

ity of his<sup>e</sup> mistaking the enemy's ship for the Bon Homme Richard, there being the most essential difference in their appearance and construction. Besides it was then full moonlight, and the sides of the Bon Homme Richard were all black, and the sides of the enemy's ship were yellow. Yet for the greater security I showed the signal for our reconnoissance, by putting out three lanterns, one at the bow, one at the stern, and one at the middle, in a horizontal line.

"Every tongue cried that he was firing into the wrong ship, but nothing availed. He passed round firing into the Bon Homme Richard, head, stern, and broadside, and by one of his volleys killed several of my best men, and mortally wounded a good officer of the fore-castle. My situation was truly deplorable. The Bon Homme Richard received several shots under the water from the Alliance. The leak gained on the pumps; and the fire increased much on board both ships. Some officers entreated me to strike, of whose courage and sense I entertain a high opinion. I would not, however, give up the point."

The fire from the tops of the Richard had struck down every man on the quarter-deck of the Serapis. Captain Jones's guns had so cut the main-mast of the foe that it reeled and fell with a fearful crash

tearing down with its spars and rigging, and leaving the ship almost a helpless wreck. Flames were bursting forth in several places. Captain Pearson saw that all was lost. With his own hands he struck his flag.

Lieutenant Richard Dale immediately, with the consent of Captain Jones, jumped upon the gunwale, seized the main-brace pendant, and swung himself upon the quarter-deck of the captured ship. He was followed by Midshipman Mayrant, with a large party of sailors. The confusion was so great that it was not known, at that moment, throughout either ship, that the *Serapis* had surrendered. One of the enemy, stationed at the waist, ran his boarding-pike through the thigh of the midshipman.

Lieutenant Dale found Captain Pearson standing aside, the image of despair, on the leeward of the quarter-deck. Addressing the unfortunate captain respectfully, he said :

“Sir, I have orders to send you on board the ship alongside.”

The first lieutenant of the *Serapis*, coming up at this moment, inquired :

“Has the enemy struck her flag?”

“No, sir,” Lieutenant Dale replied. “On the contrary, you have struck to us.”

The lieutenant of the Serapis, turning anxiously to Captain Pearson, inquired :

“ Have you struck, sir.”

“ Yes, I have ! ” was the sad, laconic reply.

All this occupied scarcely one minute. It was near midnight. Darkness and suffocating smoke enveloped the combatants. Random firing had not yet ceased, though on both ships nearly all the cannon had been dismounted.

The lieutenant of the Serapis replied, “ I have nothing more to say.” He turned about and was going below when Lieutenant Dale courteously arrested him saying, “ It is my duty to request you sir, to accompany Captain Pearson on board the ship alongside.”

“ If you will first permit me,” the lieutenant replied, “ to go below, I will silence the firing of the lower deck guns.”

“ This cannot be permitted,” was the reply. The two distinguished captives passed over to the deck of the Bon Homme Richard. Orders were sent below to cease firing. Thus terminated this most memorable of naval conflicts, after a bloody battle with muzzle to muzzle, of nearly three hours and a half. Through all time, in all naval chronicles the battle between the Bon Homme Richard and the Serapis will occupy a conspicuous position.

## CHAPTER VII.

### *Result of the Victory.*

**Dreadful Spectacle.**—Sinking of the *Bon Homme Richard*.—**Escape** of the Baltic Fleet.—Sails for the Texel.—Interesting Correspondence.—Sufferings of the American Prisoners.—Barbarity of the English Government.—Humanity of Captain Jones.—The Transference from the *Serapis* to the *Alliance*.—Extracts from the British Press.—Release of Prisoners.

AFTER the excitement of the conflict was over, Captain Jones was shocked at the spectacle of devastation and misery which was presented to him. All sense of triumph was lost in emotions of compassion and sadness. In his official journal he wrote :

“A person must have been an eye-witness to form a just idea of the tremendous scene of carnage, wreck, and ruin that everywhere appeared. Humanity cannot but recoil from the prospect of such finished horror, and lament that war should produce such fatal consequences.”

The carpenters were immediately employed in examining the *Bon Homme Richard*, to see if her



wounds were capable of being healed. The lashings were cut which bound her to the *Serapis*, and all the available hands were employed, at the pumps, to keep her afloat. Captain Jones took possession of his shattered prize, the *Serapis*, to which he transferred all the crew, excepting those which attended the pumps. Boats were in waiting, ready to take them on board the *Serapis* should the water gain upon them too fast. The surveying officers soon reported unanimously, that the ship could not be kept afloat long enough to reach port. It took all the night, and some hour's the next morning hastily but carefully to remove the wounded.

Captain Jones was very anxious to save the ship, and made every possible effort until nine o'clock the next evening. The water was then up to her lower deck. She rolled in the waves in utter helplessness, threatening every moment to go down. The water was gushing from her port-holes and swashing through her hatchways. It was necessary at once to abandon her. From the deck of the *Serapis* Captain Jones sadly watched the dying convulsions of his "good old ship." He wrote :

"We did not abandon her till after nine o'clock. A little after ten, I saw, with inexpressible grief, the last glimpse of the *Bon Homme Richard*. No lives were lost with the ship; but it was impossible to

save the stores of any sort whatever. I lost the best part of my clothes, books, and papers. Several of my officers lost all their clothes and effects."

Making one or two dying surges, the *Richard* plunged headlong into the fathomless abyss, carrying her dead with her to their sublime ocean burial. There the mangled bodies will repose till, at the summons of the archangel's trump, the sea shall give up the dead that are in it. According to the most accurate estimate which can be made, forty-two were killed, and forty severely wounded. Light wounds were not counted. There was no accurate account taken of the killed and wounded on board the *Serapis*. The surgeon's report to the British Admiralty, gives the number of wounded at seventy-five, but does not give the number killed. Captain Pearson states that there were many more wounded than appears on the surgeon's list. Captain Jones, who had the best opportunity for knowing, and who was not given to exaggeration, estimates the killed at one hundred, and the wounded at about the same number.

Captain Landais, of the *Alliance*, was court-martialed for his atrocious conduct. There can be no reasonable doubt, from the evidence given on his trial, that he hoped the *Serapis* would conquer and capture the *Bon Homme Richard*. During the con-

fact he kept entirely out of harm's way, so that not a shot struck him. After the Richard had surrendered Captain Landais intended to come forward, attack the Serapis exhausted and shattered by its previous conflict, and with her guns dismounted and encumbered by the wounded and the dead, and thus make an easy conquest of the British ship and rescue her prize. He could thus retire *with glory*, dragging the Serapis and the Bon Homme Richard in his train. Finding it a little doubtful whether the Richard would yield, he concluded to help the Serapis. Three of his officers declared that Landais said to them :

“I should have thought it no harm if the Bon Homme Richard had struck her flag. That would have given me an opportunity to take the Serapis and to retake her.”

I must now leave Landais, for the present, though I shall have occasion to refer to him again. The Baltic fleet escaped. The fact is easily explained from the loss of the Richard, the crippled state of the Serapis, with both main-mast and mizzen-mast dragging at her sides, and the treacherous conduct of Landais. Jury-masts were erected upon the Serapis, and for ten days the shattered ship was tossed on the stormy waves of the North Sea. Captain Jones was striving to reach Dunkirk, the most

northerly and consequently the nearest seaport in France.

In the extreme northwest of Holland there is a somewhat renowned island called the Texel. It is about thirteen miles long and six broad, and is situated near the mouth of the Zuyder Zee, or South Sea, as that portion of the German Ocean is called. It is nearly two hundred miles north of the most northerly frontier of France. Contrary winds, and the extremely suffering state of the prisoners and his wounded, rendered it necessary for him to run into that neutral port.

Captain Jones never made any complaint respecting his own hardships. But while upon this eventful campaign his toils, responsibilities, and anxieties had been such that during the whole time he had never indulged in more than three hours' sleep in the twenty-four. The news of the capture of the Serapis spread rapidly through Europe and America. The haughty attitude England had ever assumed had rendered her unpopular with all other nations. Consequently there was a general rejoicing over the great victory of Captain Jones. It was something new for England to lose one of her finest frigates in a fairly fought battle with an inferior force.

It is said that this terrible battle between the *Pon Homme* Richard and the Serapis was more

noised abroad over the world than any naval conflict ever engaged in, in ancient or modern times. It was a marvel to all Europe to see an English ship of war, hitherto generally supposed to be invincible, strike to a frigate of the feeble colonies of America, which had, as yet, scarcely a national name and whose flag was unknown. The superiority of the British ship, both in build and in armament, the treacherous conduct of Landais, and the desperate resistance of both parties, apparently to the last possible degree, excited astonishment and admiration both in the Old World and the New. Captain Jones was the hero of the day. His name was upon all lips. The enthusiasm in Paris was almost boundless. Dr. Franklin wrote to him under date of October 15th, 1779:

“For some days after the arrival of your express, scarce anything was talked of at Paris or Versailles but your cool conduct and persevering bravery during that terrible conflict. You may believe that the impression on my mind was not less strong than on that of others, but I do not choose to say, in a letter to yourself, all I think on such an occasion.”

He informed Captain Jones that he had written to Landais, informing him that he would have an opportunity, before a court-martial, to answer the charges of disobedience of orders and neglect of duty which had been brought against him. As it was

impracticable immediately to organize a court-martial, he was for the time relieved from the command of the Alliance. He added :

“ I know not whether Captain Landais will obey my orders, nor what the ministry will do with him if he comes. But I suspect that they may, by some of their concise operations, save the trouble of a court-martial.”

It subsequently appeared that Landais had previously been dismissed from the French service for insubordination. This fact was not known to Congress when he was assigned to the command of the Alliance. They simply knew that he was a Frenchman of illustrious family, of great pretensions, and who had been an officer in the French navy. Congress inconsiderately, in its anxiety to compliment France, placed him in a position which his eccentric passions totally disqualified him from filling.

Landais wrote to Dr. Franklin soliciting another command. In a very characteristic reply, dated March 12th, 1780, Dr. Franklin wrote :

“ No one has ever learned the opinion I formed of you, from the inquiry made into your conduct. I kept it entirely to myself, I have not even hinted it in my letters to America, because I would not hazard giving any one a bias to your prejudice.

“ By communicating a *part of that opinion pri*

vately to you I can do no harm, for you may burn it. I should not give you the pain of reading it, if your demand did not make it necessary.

“ I think you then, so imprudent, so litigious and quarrelsome a man, even with your best friends, that peace and good order, and consequently the quiet and regular subordination so necessary to success, are, where you preside, impossible. These are within my observation and apprehension. Your military operations I leave to more capable judges. If, therefore, I had twenty ships of war, I should not give one of them to Captain Landais. The same temper which *excluded* him from the French marine would weigh equally with me.”

It was one important object of Captain Jones to get prisoners, that by an exchange he might release the American prisoners who were suffering the most barbarous treatment in the prisons of England. He carried with him into the Texel, five hundred British captives. Franklin proposed to the British government to exchange them for an equal number of Americans. But the ministry refused. They sent a large number of men-of-war to watch the channel, and cruise off the Texel, quite confident that they should be able to capture the prisoners as soon as any attempt was made to transport them to France. For some time they refused to exchange American

prisoners on any terms. They would surrender the French captives alone, in return for the English.

The sympathies of kind-hearted Captain Jones were deeply moved in behalf of the captive Americans. And yet his feelings would not allow him to retaliate in treating with inhumanity the British prisoners in his hands. They were generally poor and ignorant men. Not a few had been impressed into the service. They were not responsible for the cruelty of the government, over which they had no control. There was a large party in England totally opposed to this unrighteous war, and still more opposed to the barbarity with which the government was conducting it.

When it was proposed and *carried* in Parliament to employ the savages as the allies of Great Britain, —to hire the savages, with torch and tomahawk and scalping knife, in midnight assault, to burn the log-cabins and butcher the helpless women and children in their lonely homes, far away in the wilderness, hundreds of voices were raised in indignant remonstrance. The Earl of Chatham exclaimed, in the House of Lords, in one of the most eloquent and impassioned of addresses :

“I am astonished, I am shocked, to hear such principles confessed ; to hear them avowed in this house or in this country. Were I an American, as I



am an Englishman, I would never lay down my arms —never, never never.”

One of the London Journals of September 21st, 1779, contains the following notice: “The master of a sloop from Harwich, who arrived yesterday, saw on Saturday last, no less than eleven sail-of-war going in search of Paul Jones, and among them was the Edgar of seventy-four guns. By the examination of four men, belonging to one of Paul Jones’s squadron, it appears that Jones’s orders were not to burn any houses or towns. What an example of honor and greatness does America thus show to us. While our troops are running about from town to town on their coast, burning everything with a wanton wicked barbarity, Dr. Franklin gives no orders to retaliate. He is above it. And there was a time when an English minister would have disdained to make war in so villanous a mode. It is a disgrace to the nation.”

The London Chronicle of October 17th, 1779, contained the following notice: “Last Tuesday Paul Jones, with his prizes, the Serapis and Scarborough, entered the Texel, and appeared on the exchange, where business gave way to curiosity. The crowd pressing upon him, by whom he was styled the terror of the English, he withdrew to a room fronting a public square, where Monsieur Donneville, the

French agent, and the Americans, paid him such a volley of compliments, and such homage as he could only answer with a bow. He was dressed in the American uniform, with a Scotch bonnet edged with gold; is of a middling stature, stern countenance, and swarthy complexion.

Captain Cunningham had received a commission for a privateer, from Commissioners Franklin and Deane. He had cruised in the Channel with great success, and had become quite a terror to the English. Being captured he was treated with such barbarity that Congress twice passed resolutions threatening retaliation. But the humanity of the nation recoiled from plunging innocent men into loathsome dungeons, and freezing and starving them, to retaliate for crimes committed by those who were clothed in purple and fine linen and who fared sumptuously every day. Captain Jones wrote to Dr. Franklin, from Amsterdam, under the date of October 11th, 1779:

“As I am informed that Captain Cunningham is threatened with unfair play by the British government, I am determined to keep in my hands the captain of the *Serapis*, as a hostage for Cunningham's release as a prisoner of war. I wish heartily that poor Cunningham, whom I am taught to regard as a Continental officer, was exchanged, as with his

assistance I could form a court-martial, which I believe you will see unavoidable."

Captain Pearson and the other British prisoners were provided for, in all respects, as comfortably as circumstances would allow. And yet the English captain wrote the following curious complaint to his illustrious captor. We do not feel at liberty to correct his bad grammar. The letter was dated October 19th, 1799.

"Captain Pearson presents his compliments to Captain Jones, and is sorry to find himself so little attended to in his present situation, as not to have been favored with either a *Call* or a line from Captain Jones since his return from Amsterdam. Captain Pearson is sorry to say that he cannot look upon such behavior in any other light than as a breach of that *Civility* which his rank, as well as behavior on all occasions entitles to; he, at the same time, wishes to be informed, by Captain Jones, whether any steps has been taken towards the enlargement or exchange of him, his officers and people, or what is intended to be done with them. As he cannot help thinking it a very unprecedented circumstance ~~their~~ being kept here as prisoners, on board of ship, being so long in a neutral port."

The dignified reply of Captain Jones deserves insertion in full. The English Government, through

its ambassador at the Hague, had positively refused to ransom the English prisoners, at the Texel, by exchanging for them American prisoners. Captain Pearson could not have been ignorant of this fact. The reply was dated on board the Serapis, October 20th, 1779.

“As you have not been prevented from corresponding with your friends, and particularly with the English ambassador at the Hague, I could not suppose you to be unacquainted with his memorial of the 8th, to the States General, and therefore I thought it fruitless to pursue the negociation for the exchange of the prisoners of war now in our hands.

“I wished to avoid any painful altercation with you on that subject. I was persuaded that you had been in the highest degree sensible that my behavior toward you had been far from a breach of civility. This charge, sir, is not a civil return for the polite hospitality and disinterested attentions you have hitherto experienced.

“I know not what difference of respect is due to *Rank* between your service and ours. I suppose however the difference must be thought *very great* in England, since I am informed that Captain Cunningham, of equal denomination, and who bears a senior rank, in the service of America, than yours in the

service of England, is now confined in England, *in a dungeon and in fetters!*

“ Humanity, which has hitherto superseded the plea of retaliation in American breasts, has induced me, notwithstanding the procedure of Sir Joseph Yorke,\* *to seek after permission to land* the dangerously wounded, as well prisoners as Americans, to be supported and cured at the expense of our continent. The permission of the government has been obtained; but the magistrates continue to make objections. I shall not discontinue my application. I am ready to adopt any means you may propose for their preservation and recovery; and, in the meantime, we shall continue to treat them with the utmost care and attention, equally, as you know, to the treatment of our people of the same rank.

“ As it is possible that you have not yet seen the memorial of your ambassador to the States General, I enclose a paper which contains a copy. And I think he has since written what, in the opinion of good men, will do still less honor to his pen. I cannot conclude without informing you that unless Cap-

\* Sir Joseph Yorke was the British ambassador at the Hague. He insisted that the Dutch Government should take from Captain Jones, the *Serapis* and the Countess of Scarborough. He said that as England had not recognized the United States, the captures were illegal, as a commission had not been granted to Captain Jones by a sovereign power.

tain Cunningham is immediately better treated in England, I expect orders, in consequence, from his Excellency, Dr. Franklin. Therefore, I beseech you, sir, to interfere."

The British Government, by threats, so intimidated the States General, that they disavowed any intention of recognizing the Independence of the United States. They refused to furnish Captain Jones with any munitions of war, and ordered him immediately to leave the Texel. This seemed to insure his utter destruction; for powerful British men-of-war were cruising just off the island, on the watch to grasp him the moment he should put to sea.

In a memorial which the British minister, Sir Joseph Yorke, presented on the 29th of September, he wrote :

"I cannot but comply with the strict orders of his majesty (the king of England) by renewing, in the strongest and most pressing manner his request, that these ships and their crews may be stopped and delivered up, which the *pirate Paul Jones*, of Scotland, who is a rebel subject, and a criminal of the state, has taken." He also demanded that all the officers of the United States navy should be treated as *pirates*; for their commissions were illegal, not having been granted by a government which England had recognized as a sovereign power.

But the French Government promptly and efficiently interfered. It assured the States General that though Captain Jones received his commission from the Congress of the United States, still that he also sailed under the sanction of the flag of France, in a French ship, and that the French flag covered the prizes he had captured. The sympathies of the Dutch Government were with America. Under this complicated state of affairs it was decided that prizes which Captain Jones had taken with French ships should be regarded as prizes belonging to the king of France; and that Captain Jones should take command of the American frigate the *Alliance*.

In obedience with this order, at midnight, Captain Jones, having delivered to the French ambassador the ships and prizes which were deemed to belong to the French king, took command of the *Alliance*, and surrendered the *Serapis* to Captain Cottineau of the *Pallas*. The eccentric if not insane Landais quarrelled with almost every one who approached him. He challenged Captain Cottineau to a duel. He was a very accomplished swordsman. Very unwisely, Captain Cottineau, who was not particularly skilful with that weapon, allowed his insulting opponent, in addition to many other wrongs and outrages, the privilege of thrusting his sword through his opponent's body, inflicting a very

painful, disabling, and dangerous wound. Landais then sent a similar challenge to Captain Jones, who very properly replied by sending officers to arrest him. Upon this he fled and made his way to Paris where we shall again hear of him.

Extracts from Captain Jones's letters will show, better than any description, the noble character of this truly noble man ; a man who has been strangely misrepresented. He wrote to the Marquis de Lafayette, from the Serapis, at the Texel, on the 28th of October, 1779 :

"The late brutalities of the Britons in America fill me with horror and indignation. They forget that they are men. And I believe that nothing will bring them to their senses but the most exemplary retaliation.

"I wish to answer, very particularly, the points which you have propounded. 1st, I never meant to ask a reward for my services, either from France or America. Consequently the approbation of the Court and of the Congress is all the gratification I can wish for. 2d, I yet intend to undertake whatever the utmost exertion of my abilities will reach in support of the common cause, as far as any force that may in future be intrusted to my direction may enable to succeed."

One of the London journals. of September 29th,



1779, gives the following amusing exaggeration of the force under Captain Jones's command, and of the terror his achievements had inspired :

"An express has arrived from Aymouth with information that Paul Jones was off there with five ships of war and two thousand troops ; that on the 19th they appeared off Sunderland and put the inhabitants into great confusion, as they expected them to land every hour, or destroy the ships in the harbor."

Another London journal gives the following account of this celebrated cruise :

"On Saturday noon two gentlemen of the corporation of Hull arrived express at the Admiralty, with the alarming account that the celebrated American Corsair, Paul Jones, had entered the river Humber, on Thursday last, and chased a vessel within a mile of the pier, where he sunk, burned, and destroyed sixteen valuable vessels, which threw the whole town and neighborhood into the utmost consternation.

"On Saturday night another express arrived, at the Admiralty, with the further disagreeable intelligence that Paul Jones's squadron, after having done more mischief to the shipping on Friday, had fallen in with the Baltic fleet, had taken their convoy, the *Serapis* man-of-war, of forty-four guns and the armed

ship, the Countess of Scarborough, of twenty-four guns. This action was seen by thousands of spectators. The other ships of Jones's squadron were making havoc among the fleet, most of which, however, had taken shelter near Flamborough Head.

"From four captured Americans it was discovered that it was Jones's plan to alarm the coasts of Wales, Ireland, the western parts of Scotland, and the North Channel. He took several prizes on the coast of Ireland, particularly two armed transports with stores for New York. He had it in his power to burn Leith; but his orders are only to burn shipping. His squadron is now but weakly manned, owing to the great number of prizes he has taken; and it, therefore, may fall an easy conquest to the sixteen sail of men-of-war who have orders to go after him.

"Expresses also arrived on Saturday, from Sunderland, stating that Paul Jones had taken sixteen more sail of colliers. In consequence of the capture of so many colliers and the interruption of the trade, the price of coal will be enormous. Instead of having the dominion of the sea, it is now evident that we are not able to defend our own coast from depredations. Yesterday Lord Sandwich informed some Russian merchants that twenty of his Majesty's ships were sent in quest of Paul Jones."

Franklin, who was ever in very cordial sympathy with Paul Jones, wrote him many and very affectionate letters when the heroic conqueror, entirely destitute of funds, was surrounded with embarrassments, at the Texel, sufficient to break down the spirits and to crush the energies of any ordinary man. It was indeed a question how the prisoners were to be conveyed to France. Those northern seas were swarming with English ships, whose commanders were intensely anxious to capture the commissioned naval officer of the United States, whose commission was ratified by alliance with France, and whom they still had the insolence to stigmatize as a *pirate*. Franklin wrote to him, under date of October 15, 1779:

“I am uneasy about your prisoners. I wish they were safe in France. You will then have completed the glorious work of giving liberty to all the Americans, who have so long languished for it in the British prisons; for there are not so many there as you have now taken.”

Paul Jones, in command of his squadron, was rightly entitled to the designation of commodore. He was so regarded by the French court, who had intrusted to him the fleet. He is thus addressed by the Duke of Vauguyon. In a letter, under date

of December 21, 1779, addressed to Commodore Jones, the duke writes:

"I have received, my dear commodore, the letter you have addressed to me. I perceive, with pain, that you do not view your situation in the right light. I can assure you that the ministers of the king have no intention to cause you the least disagreeable feelings, as the honorable testimonials of the esteem of his majesty, which I send you, ought to convince you."

Every eminent man must have rivals and enemies. There were scores of French officers hungering for high command. They envied the renown of Jones. They complained that they were neglected, while a *foreigner* was intrusted with the command of French ships. Many of these complainants were nobles of great wealth as well as illustrious rank. The French ministry thus had great embarrassments to encounter. They appreciated highly the services of Commodore Jones. They were very desirous of immediately giving him new employment. And yet they felt under the necessity of leaving him, for a time, in idleness, greatly to his chagrin. The impatience he manifested under these circumstances reflect honor upon his patriotic enthusiasm. He wrote to the Duke of Vauguyon, on the 25th of December, 1779, as follows:

“You do me great honor as well as justice, my lord, by observing that no satisfaction can be more precious to me than that of giving new proofs of my zeal for the common cause of France and America. And the interest you take to facilitate the means of my giving such proofs, by essential services, claims my best thanks. I hope I shall not, through any imprudence of mine, render ineffectual any noble design that may be in contemplation for the general good. Whenever that object is mentioned, my private concerns are out of the question.

“With a deep sense of your generous sentiments of personal regard toward me, and with the most sincere wishes to meet that regard by my conduct through life, I am,” etc.

The Dutch Government, goaded by the menaces of England, though it dared not command the *French* ships to leave its ports, insisted that the *American* commodore, whose government Holland had not yet recognized, should immediately, with the American frigate the *Alliance*, leave the Texel. But there were twelve British men-of-war, at the mouth of the harbor, watching for him. Eight were at the northern entrance of the port, and four at the southern.

Commodore Jones, for I shall henceforth give him the designation to which I consider him justly

entitled, kept the banner of the Stars and Stripes proudly floating from the mast-head of the Alliance. He also unflinchingly declared that he never bore any commission but that which he received from the Congress of the United States of America. It was said that there were, in all, forty British men-of-war cruising in the German Ocean, so as to render the escape of Paul Jones impossible. The Dutch admiral, on the 12th, informed him they must insist upon his sailing with the first fair wind.

To add to his embarrassments he found that Landais had left the Alliance in the most deplorable condition, totally unfit for service without extensive repairs. She was an admirable ship in model and construction, and was remarkable for her sailing qualities. But, through sheer negligence and general demoralization, nearly everything was in a ruinous condition. The sails were worn out. The cables had gone to decay. Her battery was in a condition unfit for action, and her small arms quite out of order. Most of the powder had either become damaged by leakage, or rendered unfit for use by neglecting to turn the kegs. The officers were all quarrelling with each other, and the men insubordinate. Intemperance and the want of cleanliness, with the total absence of discipline, had struck down **many** of the crew with epidemical diseases.

Commodore Jones made the most vigorous efforts to prepare the Alliance for sea; and he promised the government that he would leave, at all hazards, as soon as the wind would serve. But before he sailed he enjoyed the great gratification of learning that Dr. Franklin had succeeded in obtaining the liberation of all the American prisoners in England, by exchanging for them the prisoners Commodore Jones had captured. He also had the happiness of grasping the hand, at the Texel, of Captain Cunningham, who, by the energies of Commodore Jones, **had been rescued from the most dreadful bondage.**

## CHAPTER VIII.

### *Commodore Jones at Court.*

**Offer of a Privateersman.—Indignant Reply.—The Renown of Commodore Jones.—Successful Retreat.—Cruise through the Channel.—Poetic Effusion.—Enters Corunna.—Letter to Lafayette.—Embarrassed Finances of Franklin.—Intrigues of Landais.—His Efforts to Excite Mutiny.—Testimony against him.—Commodore Jones at Court.**

IT was indeed running the gauntlet, for Commodore Jones, with a frigate of but thirty-four guns, and in poor sailing trim, to escape from the Texel, and run down the German Ocean, through the English Channel and the Straits of Dover, to some French port, when the whole available force of the British navy was on the lookout for him, with twelve men-of-war cruising before the mouth of the harbor. It would seem that, under those circumstances, escape were impossible.

Just before sailing, the French minister, M. de la Sartine, offered Commodore Jones, through the Duke de Vauguyon, a commission as captain of a privateersman, which several gentleman of wealth had fitted out, in the best possible manner, to enrich



themselves by preying upon British commerce. This assumption that Commodore Jones was a mere adventurer, guided by the love of money, he regarded as an insult. In indignant terms he rejected the offer. Under date of December 13th, he wrote to the duke, as follows :

“ MY LORD: Perhaps there are many men in the world, who would esteem as an honor the commission that I have this day refused. My rank, from the beginning, knew no superior in the marine of America. How then must I be humbled were I to receive a letter of marque. It is a matter of the highest astonishment to me that, after so many compliments and fair professions, the court should offer the present insult to my understanding, and suppose me capable of disgracing my present commission. I confess that I never merited all the praise bestowed on my past conduct ; but I also feel that I have far less merited such a reward.”

The letter containing these sentiments he enclosed in one to Dr. Franklin, that it might be presented by him to the duke, if it met his approval. In his letter he still more forcibly gave expression to his wounded feelings. The heroic man added :

“ We hear that the enemy still keeps a squadron cruising off here. But this shall not prevent my attempts to depart, whenever the wind will permit.

I hope we have recovered the trim of this ship, which was entirely lost during the last cruise ; and I do not much fear the enemy in the long and dark nights of this season. The ship is well-manned, and shall not be given away. I need not tell you, that I will do my utmost to take prisoners and prizes, in my way from hence."

The great victory Commodore Jones had achieved gave him singular renown. The ladies, especially, were charmed by his chivalry. He received constant attentions from the most eminent in rank. The palace and the castle opened their doors to welcome him. He had the most urgent invitations to visit Amsterdam and to enjoy the hospitalities of the court. But all these flattering attentions he avoided as much as possible. One great passion absorbed his soul. All his energies were consecrated to the sublime mission of emancipating the United States, and ennobling their flag.

"Duty," he said, "must take the precedence of pleasure. I must wait a more favorable opportunity to kiss the hands of the fair."

The Alliance had a picked crew of four hundred and twenty-seven men. Nearly all these were Americans. Many of them had been liberated from British prisons by the energies of Commodore Jones. He impressed upon both officers and crew his deter

mination that he should never shrink from an engagement with any English ship which did not mount more than fifty guns.

The night of the 26th of December was dark, with a fresh, fair wind. The Alliance, in the midnight gloom, proudly unfurled at her mast-head the Stars and Stripes. Every inch of canvas was spread to catch the breeze. Flying closely along the Flemish banks, he was so fortunate as to elude the observation of the fleets watching for his capture. Before the morning dawned he was far away upon the broad expanse of the German Ocean, where fleets might cruise for weeks and not meet each other. There had been a very severe gale just before the departure of the Alliance, which blew so fiercely upon the shore, that the English squadron had been compelled to put to sea for safety. Doubtless to this event Commodore Jones was much indebted for his escape.

This successful retreat of Commodore Jones from the overwhelming forces which surrounded him is regarded, by naval authorities, as one of the most successful of naval exploits. Keeping well to the windward of the enemy's fleet, he traversed the North Sea, sailing through the narrow Straits of Dover, in full view of the British fleet in the Downs; passed the Isle of Wight, almost within hailing distance of

the shore, though quite a fleet was at anchor at Spithead ; and, though he saw two-decked cruising ships of the enemy before him and behind him and on each side of him, he eluded them all, safely emerged from the British Channel and continued his course down the western coast of France. This was a voyage of not less than fifteen hundred miles.

Sometime before leaving the Texel he had received a complimentary poetic epistle from a young lady at the Hague, who addressed him as King of the Sea. When fairly out upon the German Ocean, with leisure hours, he on the 1st of January, 1780, went into his cabin and wrote a poetic reply. He was not a poet. But it is very doubtful whether Lord Nelson, under the circumstances, could have done as well. As a specimen of his skill in versification I will give the last stanza.

“ But since, alas ! the rage of war prevails,  
And cruel Britons desolate our land,  
For freedom still I spread my willing sails,  
My unsheathed sword my injured country shall command.  
Go on, bright maid ; the muses all attend  
Genius like thine, and wish to be its friend.  
Trust me, although conveyed through this poor shift,  
My New Year's thoughts are grateful for thy gift.”

Commodore Jones was very desirous of not going empty-handed into port. It was not enough for him merely to elude his enemies. He was resolved, if

possible, to take some prizes. He therefore ran down the Bay of Biscay and westerly along the coast of Spain, several hundred miles, in a region where it was very certain that the British men-of-war would not be searching for him.

When cruising off Cape Finisterre, the extreme northwesterly cape of Spain, he encountered a very severe storm. This led him to run for shelter into the Spanish port of Corunna, where there was a fine harbor. I may remark, in passing, that this Corunna subsequently became renowned in history. Southey writes :

“Its filth is astonishing. Other towns attract the *eye* of the traveller. But Corunna takes his attention by the *nose*.”

This place became famous in the struggle between Spain and Napoleon I. To this point Sir John Moore was fleeing in his disastrous retreat before Napoleon, and near its walls he fell. The poet has immortalized the event in the sublime ode, upon his burial by moonlight.

“Not a drum was heard, nor a funeral note,  
As his corpse to the ramparts we hurried;  
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot,  
O'er the grave where our hero was buried.”

At Corunna Commodore Jones was very kindly received by the Spanish authorities. He remained

in port twelve days, making sundry needful repairs. Upon the evening of his arrival he wrote to Lafayette:

“I made my passage safe through the Channel in spite of all their cruising ships and squadrons; and had the pleasure of looking at them in the Downs, and in passing in sight of the Isle of Wight. I steered this way in hopes of meeting some of their cruisers off Cape Finisterre, but am hitherto disappointed.”

On the 28th of January, 1780, he again set sail, and after the unsuccessful cruise of a fortnight, entered the harbor of L'Orient, in France, on the 13th of February. This strongly fortified French port is seated at the head of the bay Port Louis, about three miles from the ocean. Here he learned that he was accused of cherishing a strong dislike for the French people. In reply to this rumor he wrote to the Marquis de Lafayette, under date of February 18th, 1780.

“M. Weibert has, I understand, taken great pains to promulgate that I do not love France. To come to the point, here follows my political profession. I am a citizen of the world, totally unfettered by the little mean distinctions of country or of climate, which diminish or set bounds to the benevolence of the heart. Impelled by principles of gratitude and

philanthropy I drew my sword at the beginning of the American Revolution. And when France so nobly espoused that great cause, no individual felt the obligation with truer gratitude than myself. When the Court of France, soon after, invited me to remain for a time in Europe, I considered myself as highly honored by the application that was made to the American commissioners. Since that time I have been at every instant, and I still am, ready to do my utmost for the good of the common cause of France and America.

“As an American officer, and as a man, I affectionately love and respect the character and nation of France, and hope the alliance with America may last forever. I owe the greatest obligation to the generous praise of the French nation on my past conduct, and shall be happy to merit future favor. I greatly love and esteem his most Christian Majesty as the great ally of America, the best of kings, and the amiable friend and protector of the rights of human nature. Therefore he has few of his own subjects who would bleed, in his present cause, with greater freedom than myself, and none who are more disinterested. At the same time I lament the calamities of war, and wish, above all things, for an honorable, happy, and lasting peace.

“My fortune is not augmented by the part I

have hitherto acted in the revolution, although I have had frequent opportunities of acquiring riches. And I pledged myself to the worthy part of mankind, that my future conduct in the war shall not forfeit their good opinion. I am, with great and sincere affection, happy in your friendship."

Though Commodore Jones had not captured any prize, he fortunately met an American ship, the *Livingston*, laden with tobacco, which he convoyed into L'Orient.

The *Alliance* was needed to convey stores to the United Colonies. But she was in need of very thorough repairs before she could safely spread sail on so important a voyage. The seas were covered with British war vessels of double her number of guns. It was therefore essential that she should be prepared for a rapid flight. There were fifteen thousand stand of good arms to be sent, and one hundred and twenty large bales of cloth for the army, with other freight of great value. The loss of these would prove a great calamity.

Commodore Jones felt that it would be madness to undertake to cross the ocean, with so valuable a cargo, without putting the ship in the best possible trim. But the French court, which had been at great expense in fitting out its own ships, declined furnishing funds from an exhausted treasury; and



the American commissioners in Paris, representatives of the feeble colonies, had neither money nor credit. There is true pathos in the letter which Dr. Franklin wrote the commodore on this occasion.

“As to refitting your ship,” he wrote, “at the expense of this court, there is not the least probability of obtaining it ; and therefore I cannot ask it. The whole expense will therefore fall upon me ; and I am ill provided to bear it, having so many unexpected calls upon me from all quarters. I therefore beg you would have mercy on me. Put me to as little charge as possible, and take nothing you can possibly do without. I approve of your applying to Messrs. Gourlade and Moylan for what repairs you want, having an exceeding good opinion of those gentlemen. But let me repeat it, for God’s sake be sparing, unless you mean to make me a bankrupt, or have your drafts dishonored, for want of money in my hands to pay them.”

To this appeal the commodore replied, “I feel your reasons for urging frugality. And as I have not, hitherto, been among the extravagant servants of America, so you may depend upon it, my regard for you will make me particularly nice in my present situation.”

By the middle of April the Alliance, under the very energetic and skilful superintendence of Com-

Commodore Jones, was ready for sea. Competent judges declared that it was one of the finest frigates to be found in France. Though it was manifestly for Commodore Jones's pecuniary interest to remain with his splendid ship in the region of rich prizes, where at any time, in a few hours, he could run into the fortified ports of France, yet, without a murmur, he undertook the more humble employment of conveying stores to America.

There were four gentlemen in Paris, including one of the commissioners, Mr. Arthur Lee, who wished to take passage with him. Landais, when he fled from the Texel, left his trunks on board the Alliance. Doctor Franklin wrote to Commodore Jones:

“Captain Landais has demanded of me an order to you, to deliver to him his trunks. I find him so exceedingly captious and critical, and so apt to misconstrue, as an intended injustice, every expression in a language which he does not immediately understand, that I am tired of writing anything for him or about him, and am determined to have nothing further to do with him.”

Innumerable difficulties had arisen about the adjustment and distribution of the prizes. The sailors had not received their wages, and not even a dollar of their prize money. Many of them were in a state

of great destitution. Their chests of clothing had gone down in the *Bon Homme Richard*; and after the long delay in the Texel they were almost in rags.

Landais, having been commissioned by the American Congress, demanded to be sent to this country for trial upon the charges brought against him. This request had been granted, and Dr. Franklin had furnished him with funds to pay his passage, in the *Luzerne*, an American merchant ship. There were many very serious charges tabled against him. In defence of the most severe accusation, that he had fired into the *Bon Homme Richard*, he presented the plea that the two ships were lashed together, and that he could not fire into the *Serapis*, without some of his shot being liable to strike the *Richard*. But the testimony given by Nathaniel Fanning seems conclusive, as it was corroborated by much other testimony. He was stationed in the main-top of the *Richard*, where he remained during the whole action.

He testified that two hours after the engagement commenced, the *Alliance* came under the stern of the *Richard*, and discharged her whole broadside into the ship. She then came under the bow of the *Richard*, and discharged another volley of grape and round shot. The *Alliance* was within hail, and some of the officers of the *Richard* shouted, "For God's

sake don't fire into us. You have already killed several of our men." Still she fired a number of shot afterwards into the Richard.

Another officer of the Richard testified that he was standing on the quarter-deck in the midst of the smoke and tumult of the battle, when they were struck by a raking fire, and two men fell dead at his side. He then heard several cry out, "The Alliance is manned with Englishmen, and is firing on us." The Alliance then passed by, and after a couple of hours came under their stern and discharged a full broadside into the Richard.

"It is my sincere opinion," this witness testified, "that the motive of Captain Landais must have been to kill Captain Jones, and distress the Richard, so as to cause her to strike to the Serapis, that he might be able to take both vessels and honor himself with the laurels of that day."

Several pages of similar testimony might be given. All alike testified that the Alliance never passed on the off-side of the Serapis; but ever kept the Richard between the Serapis and her guns. Thus, if any of her shot struck the Serapis, they must have first passed through the Richard.

Commodore Jones, sympathizing with his men in their utter destitution, and the apparent wrongs under which they were suffering, felt constrained to

go personally to Paris to plead with the court at Versailles, in their behalf. Months had passed during which they had received no wages. They had captured many valuable prizes, but no money had come back to them. Two of these, it will be remembered which were valued at two hundred thousand dollars, Captain Landais, contrary to the orders of Commodore Jones, had sent to Norway. The Norwegian Government, alarmed by the menaces of England, surrendered them both to the British ambassador, on the ground that Captain Jones had not been commissioned by any government which Norway had recognized.

The other prizes, which were in French ports, were to be sold at auction. But in consequence of some technicalities of the laws, whose delays are proverbial, the ships had not yet been sold. The commissioners at Paris, in their poverty, sent to the crew of the Alliance a sum of money which amounted to about ten dollars apiece. This did but excite their indignation and derision. Some, in their chagrin, chucked the coin into the water.

Commodore Jones was a handsome man about thirty-six years of age, of fine figure, fair complexion, pleasant features, and courtly bearing. He was a man of literary tastes and studious habits. He wrote poetry, and spoke the French language with

considerable fluency. These personal and mental accomplishments, added to his chivalric exploits, the fame of which had filled the world, rendered him an object of remarkable and universal attention in the Court of Versailles.

The king was his personal friend, and made him a present of an exquisitely wrought gold-headed sword. The king and the court were united in lavishing honor upon him. He was invited to dine with the most illustrious members of that aristocratic court. Wherever he appeared, the eyes of the crowd followed his steps. These extraordinary attentions, which were sufficient to turn the head of any ordinary man, do not appear to have diminished, in the slightest degree, Paul Jones's zeal in the public service. The court was then greatly embarrassed for money. The measureless extravagances of Louis XIV. and Louis XV. had plunged the nation into hopeless bankruptcy, and hourly, matters were ripening for all the horrors of the French Revolution.

Thus the court, though lavish in compliments, had but little money to confer in charity upon the struggling colonies. Commodore Jones, with unusual literary culture for a man in his situation, moved through all these scenes with the winning manners of a well-bred man. He felt the importance of con-

culminating all possible influences in favor of the imperilled country of his adoption.

In the court of Versailles, the ladies often controlled the most important affairs of state. The guilty favorites of the two preceding kings had in a great measure guided the destinies of Europe. Maria Antoinette was far more the sovereign than her weak but well-meaning spouse.

Among the ladies of highest rank, by whom he was particularly honored, were a daughter of Louis XV., and the Countess of Lavendahl.

An English lady at Versailles writes to a friend, "The famous Paul Jones dines and sups here often. He is a smart man of thirty-six, speaks but little French, appears to be an extraordinary genius, a poet as well as a hero. He is greatly admired here, especially by the ladies, who are wild for love of him. But he adores the Countess of Lavendahl, who has honored him with every mark of politeness and distinction. A few days ago he wrote some verses extempore, of which I send you a copy." The following are the verses.

"Insulted freedom bled : I felt her cause,  
And drew my sword to vindicate her laws  
From principle, and not from vain applause  
I've done my best ; self-interest apart  
And self-reproach a stranger to my heart,  
My zeal still prompts, ambitious to pursue  
The foe, ye fair, of liberty and you ;

Grateful for praise, spontaneous and unbought,  
A generous people's love not meanly sought ;  
To merit this, and bend the knee to beauty  
Shall be my earliest and my latest duty."

In a subsequent letter the same lady wrote, " Since my last, Paul Jones drank tea and supped here. If I am in love with him, for love I may die. I have as many rivals as there are ladies. The most formidable is Lady Lavendak! who possesses all his heart. This lady is of high rank and virtue, very sensible, good-natured and affable. Besides this, she is possessed of youth, beauty, wit, and every other female accomplishment."

Commodore Jones had but just left L'Orient, on the all-important mission to Versailles, when Landais went to that port to get his trunks and to take passage in the Luzerne for America. Finding the commodore absent, and the crew almost in a state of mutiny, he resolved to make an attempt to recover the command of the Alliance.

He represented that Jones, leaving the crew in their destitution, had gone to Paris to enjoy the feasting and adulation which were lavished upon him there. He insinuated that they had been robbed of their prize money, and that Jones and his confederates had appropriated it to their own luxurious indulgence. He also represented that Jones was regarded by the European courts, and would be



regarded by Congress, simply as a privateersman, sailing on his own account, and that consequently his seamen, when they arrived in America, would be deserted by him, and that they could expect no wages from Congress.

This was very artful malice. It shows that Landais possessed very considerable powers of wicked intrigue. He even succeeded in winning over to his side Commissioner Lee, who was to return in the Alliance, and who was not on very good terms with the other members of the Congressional delegation. Captain Landais obtained from Commissioner Lee an opinion containing the following statement, under date of May, 13th :

“ From documents exhibited to me, it is clear, beyond the possibility of doubt, that Captain Landais commands the Alliance, under the full, direct, and express order of Congress ; and that no such authority appears to dismiss him from the command. In this situation Captain Landais must answer at his peril for the frigate intrusted to him, till he receives an order of Congress to deliver her to another. If such order exists, those who have it do infinite wrong to the service, in not producing it. If there is no such order, the subjects of the United States, who attempt to divest Captain Landais of the command he holds from the sovereign power, or to dis-

curb him by violence in the exercise of it, commit a high crime against the laws and sovereignty of the United States, and subject themselves to a proportionable punishment."

Mr. Lee knew full well the views of Dr. Franklin upon this all-important subject. Rather defiantly he wrote: "This is my opinion, founded on a cool and candid consideration of the authorities on both sides. You are at liberty to show this letter to whom you please, or to send it to Dr. Franklin."

Landais had abandoned the Alliance at the Texel, and had run away, to avoid arrest for challenging his superior officer to a duel. For seven months he had not stepped on board the ship, during which time Jones had been in undisputed command. He was now virtually under arrest, to be sent back to America to be tried for one of the most atrocious crimes which could be committed. Dr. Franklin, learning that Landais was still at L'Orient, and that he had written to some one, "I am waiting for Franklin's orders to take command of the Alliance," addressed a letter to him, expressing his astonishment that he was not long before on his way to America for trial, for which voyage Franklin had provided him with funds. And he added, "I waive any further dispute with you. But I charge you not to meddle with the command of the Alliance, or to create any

disturbance on board her, as you will answer to the contrary at your peril."

Landais succeeded in having a paper drawn up, and signed by one hundred and sixteen of the more than four hundred sailors of the Alliance, which was addressed to Dr. Franklin, and which stated that they would not raise the anchor, to leave L'Orient, until they had received six months' wages, the utmost farthing of the prize money due, including the ships sent to Norway, and *until their legal captain, Pierre Landais, was restored to them.*

Dr. Franklin immediately went to the court at Versailles, which is but twelve miles from Paris, and entered a complaint against Landais as a fomentor of mutiny. The proof of Landais' guilt was manifest, and orders were immediately sent for his arrest and imprisonment. In the meantime Jones had obtained from the court, orders for a fine copper-bottomed French ship, the Ariel, to sail to America in company with the Alliance. He had made all his arrangements to spread his sails a week after his return to L'Orient from Paris.

Franklin wrote to the mutinous crew of the Alliance, expressing his surprise that they could have any confidence in one who had behaved as they all knew Landais to have done. He closed his letter with the following conciliatory words:

“For myself, I believe you to be brave men and lovers of your country and its glorious cause. And I am persuaded that you have only been ill advised and misled by the artful and malicious representations of some persons I guess at.\* Take in good part this friendly counsel from an old man, who is your friend. Go home peaceably with your ship. Do your duty faithfully and cheerfully. Behave respectfully to your commander, and I am persuaded he will do the same to you. Thus you will not only be happier in your voyage, but will recommend yourselves to the future favors of Congress and your country.”

To Commodore Jones he wrote. “You are liable to have great trouble. I wish you well through it. You have shown your abilities in fighting. You have now the opportunity of showing the other necessary part in the character of a great chief—your abilities in policy.”

\* He doubtless refers to Commissioner Lee.

## CHAPTER IX.

### *The Mutiny of Landais.*

**the Visit of Jones to Versailles.—Intrigues of Landais.—The Alliance Wrested from Jones.—Complicity of Arthur Lee.—Magnanimity of Jones.—Strong Support of Dr. Johnson.—Honors Conferred upon Jones.—Strange Career of Landais.—His Life in America, and Death.—Continued Labors and Embarrassments of Jones.—His Correspondence.**

JONES immediately, upon his arrival at L'Orient, made preparations for his departure, with the two armed ships, the Alliance and the Ariel, which were to convoy several American vessels, with cargoes amounting to four hundred thousand dollars in value. Having heard that his authority had been called in question, he, on the morning of the 13th of June, mustered the crew of the Alliance on the quarter-deck, and caused his commission from Congress to be read to them, together with the order from Dr. Franklin for him to take command of the Alliance, and a subsequent order to take her to Philadelphia. When he asked if any of the crew had any complaint to make against him, not one stepped forward. All seemed to be satisfied.

Soon after, he went ashore to confer with the French authorities in reference to the armament of the Ariel. Landais was on the watch. As soon as Commodore Jones stepped ashore, Captain Landais sent an order to one of his confederates, by the name of Degges, who had been first lieutenant of the Alliance, to take command of the ship until he should receive further orders. Degges mustered the crew ; read the order to them, and also the very decided opinion of Commissioner Lee, that Landais was the legal commander of the Alliance. The sailors were bewildered. They were in danger of losing all their prize-money, and their wages for several months of arduous and perilous labor. Landais had made them golden promises. The majority decided for Landais. At that opportune moment, he came over the side of the ship and took the command.

Lieutenant Dale and the other officers of the Richard, who had come from the Serapis on board the Alliance, and who remained faithful to Commodore Jones, were thrust into boats and sent ashore. It is hardly just to call this a mutiny on the part of the sailors, for they were reasonably in doubt as to who was the commander they were legally bound to obey.

Commodore Jones, hearing the cheers of the crew of the Alliance, hastened on board. He found

Landais parading up and down the deck, flourishing his commission in his hand, and haranguing the crew in broken English. Jones was also unceremoniously sent ashore with his officers. He hastened to Versailles, to inform the governmental authorities there of what had transpired. On the 17th of June, Dr. Franklin wrote to Commodore Jones. He had probably not then been fully informed of the very serious character of the events which had taken place. In this letter he said :

“ Having been informed by several gentlemen of and from L'Orient, that it is there generally understood the mutiny on board your ship has been advised or promoted by the Honorable Arthur Lee, whom I had ordered you to receive as a passenger, I hereby withdraw that order so far as to leave the execution to your direction. If from the circumstances which have come to your knowledge it should appear to you that the peace and good government of the ship, during the voyage, may be endangered by his presence, you may decline taking that gentleman ; which I apprehend need not obstruct his return to America, as there are several ships going under your convoy, and no doubt many of their passengers may be prevailed to change places. But if you judge these suspicions groundless you will comply with the order aforesaid.”

Honorable Arthur Lee was a disappointed and angry man. He had quarrelled with his associates, and was returning to America in very ill humor. The Alliance was crowded with freight of the utmost importance to the struggling colonies. Mr. Lee insisted upon large accommodation for himself and family, for room for his carriage, and for a vast amount of baggage. This would have demanded space which was needed for transportation of the soldiers' clothing. Commodore Jones, with his soul absorbed in devotion to the public interests, and who scarcely allowed chest-room for himself, objected to the surrender of so much space to the commissioner and his family. This grievously offended Mr. Lee, and added to his discontent. Commodore Jones gives the following account of the difficulty :

“ I am convinced that Mr. Lee has acted in this manner merely because I would not become the enemy of the venerable, the wise, the good Franklin, whose heart as well as head does, and will always do, honor to human nature. I know the great and good, in this kingdom, better perhaps than any other American who has appeared in Europe since the treaty of alliance. And if my testimony could add anything to Franklin's reputation, I could witness the universal veneration and esteem with which his name inspires all ranks, not only at Versailles



and all over this kingdom, but also in Spain and Holland. And I can add from the testimony of the first characters of other nations that, with them, envy itself is dumb when the name of Franklin is but mentioned."

Upon the day of the mutiny which put Landais in possession of the Alliance, Paul Jones dined with the French admiral. He was keenly sensible of the disgrace to our nation should two commissioned officers, in a foreign port, each perhaps leading two hundred men, have a bloody battle on the deck of one of our war-ships. Such an untoward event would have disgraced our country, and the holy cause in which we were engaged, in the eyes of all Europe. And it would but add to our reproach that, in this deplorable conflict, the commissioners, sent to Paris to win France to our cause, were divided, Mr. Lee being on the one side and Dr. Franklin on the other.

The Alliance was in a French port, and consequently under French law. When the commissioners were in antagonistic opinion whether Jones or Landais was the legal commander of the ship, the sailors might well be excused for being also honestly divided in their views. Commodore Jones, a humane man, a lover of peace and justice, could not bear the thought of strewing the deck of the ship

with the bloody corpses of these ignorant men. He preferred to submit the question to the arbitration of the laws, rather than to brutal violence.

Jones despatched an express to the court, at Versailles, and immediately followed it. Upon his arrival he found, that through the intervention of Dr. Franklin, orders had already been issued for the detention of the Alliance, and the arrest of Landais. Journeying was comparatively slow in those days. After the absence of a week Commodore Jones returned. He found that, during the night preceding his arrival, Landais had warped the ship from the inner to the outer harbor, which was called Port Louis. There was still a narrow entrance through which the ship must pass before it could be out at sea. A battery commanded that passage. A boat was sent on board, with an officer, to arrest Landais in the king's name, and to announce that the Alliance would be sunk should she attempt to leave the port. Captain Landais, standing beneath the Stars and Stripes, and surrounded by his men, refused to surrender himself.

The Alliance had been placed by Congress at the disposal of Dr. Franklin. He, as the representative of the Government, was to order all her movements in Europe. This both Lee and Landais knew perfectly well. The French officer now pre-

sented to Landais the positive orders of Dr. Franklin to Landais, his officers and his men, to surrender the ship to the command of Commodore Jones.

The commodore now had the ship completely in his power. One or two broadsides from the battery would sink her and all her crew in the bottom of the bay. French soldiers were accustomed to obey command. The guns were loaded. The gunners stood ready with lighted matches. At one word of command a storm of balls would pierce the ship, and all France would receive another impressive lesson of the peril involved in disobeying the orders of the king. And yet the madman Landais, reckless of all consequences, was firm in his insubordination.

The Alliance was by far the finest ship in the feeble navy of the colonies. It was freighted with stores of inestimable value to our thinly clad, hungry, ill-provided soldiers, struggling against the most formidable military power then upon the globe. A large minority, probably a majority of the sailors were in favor of Commodore Jones. Those who adhered to Landais were assured by Commissioner Lee that they were surely in the right, and that if they abandoned Landais they would be exposed to be hung for mutiny against their lawful commander.

All the sailors felt deeply wronged. They could

not understand why they received neither wages nor prize-money. They could not know but that the malignant and artful representations of Landais were true ; that Jones, with his confederate aristocrats of the court, was squandering, in luxurious dissipation, their hard earnings. Under these circumstances it would have been cruel to consign these poor men to destruction, and our country to so great a loss. Commodore Jones, forgetting his resentment, acted the part of a magnanimous man, for which he merits the highest commendation.

He hastened to the quarters of M. Thevenard, the commandant of the port, and by his personal interposition, prevented him from opening fire upon the Alliance. He wrote to Dr. Franklin :

“ Thevenard had received orders to fire on the Alliance and sink her to the bottom, if they attempted to approach and pass the barrier that had been made across the entrance to the port. Had I even remained silent an hour the dreadful work would have been done. Your humanity will, I know, justify the part I acted, in preventing a scene that would have rendered me miserable for the rest of my life. Yesterday the within letter was brought me from Mr. Lee. He has pulled off the mask, and I am convinced is not a little disappointed that his

operations have produced no bloodshed between the subjects of France and America. Poor man ! ”

The commandant of the port called all his officers together, and they signed a paper, minutely stating the preparations they had made to render the departure of the Alliance impossible, and their great admiration of the magnanimity of Commodore Jones in causing their operations to be suspended.

Landais, unopposed, warped his ship through the mouth of the harbor and cast anchor in the roadstead of Groix. We must now take leave of Landais, with but a brief record of his subsequent career.

Pierre Landais was the youngest son of one of the proudest and, in rank, one of the most illustrious families in Normandy. Their ancestral estates had gradually passed away, and the family had become impoverished, but not the less proud. Pierre entered the Naval School, and was thoroughly instructed in the theory both of building and navigating a ship. He, however, found it difficult to get a commission so as to put his knowledge into practice. He had neither money, nor interest at court, with which to purchase court favor.

He was thus kept a mere midshipman until he was thirty-two years of age. Then for many years he remained in the humble situation of a sub-lieutenant. He was serving in this capacity, greatly

discontented with his lot, when the war broke out between England and her American colonies. Landais then came to this country in command of a French merchant-ship laden with public stores. He was a man of much address and of boundless assurance. According to his representation he enjoyed the rank of captain in the royal navy; had commanded a ship of the line; had been chief officer of the naval depot at the port of Brest, and could have commanded any advancement he desired in his own country.

But he said that his love for freedom was such, and such his admiration of the heroism of the Americans in drawing the sword in defence of popular rights, against such a gigantic power as that of Great Britain, that he had declined receiving the Cross of St. Louis, and had abjured the Roman Catholic religion, the religion of his forefathers, that he might, with all his energies, enter into the service of America.

Believing all this, and wishing, as we have said, to compliment France, Congress placed its finest frigate in the hands of Landais. The result, until the time when the Alliance left L'Orient, the reader knows.

The Alliance, with Mr. Lee on board, at length reached Philadelphia. The conduct of Landais, whose title to command his own men doubted, was so

insane that the officers, passengers and crew all became incensed. Mr. Lee was prominent in this movement. The ship was committed to the officer next in rank. A court of inquiry was held, in which Mr. Lee testified strongly against the captain as insane. The charge was so fully sustained that he was dismissed from the service of the United States. It was not deemed expedient to waste time by prosecuting the more serious charges against him. He was consequently consigned to insignificance. Thus thrown out of service, Landais took up his residence in the city of New York. Destitute of funds, he was miserably poor, living, one can hardly tell how, upon an income of but two hundred dollars a year. Still he retained all his ancient pride, maintaining the air of a gentleman, and refusing any assistance which could indicate that he was in want.

He contrived, at every session of Congress, whether at Philadelphia or Washington, to make his appearance, and to urge a memorial expressive of the injustice which he thought had been done him, and demanding restitution to his rank and the arrears of pay. It is said that at one time he was reduced almost to nothing, when an unexpected division of some prize-money gave him an annuity of one hundred and five dollars. With true French hilarity he

said, "I have now two dollars a week on which to live, and an odd dollar for charity at the end of the year."

To the last he kept up the exterior and the courtly bearing of a gentleman. All that was visible of his linen was ever spotlessly clean. His thread-bare coat was brushed with the utmost neatness. On ceremonious occasions, or when making a call, he wore conspicuously a pair of paste knee-buckles, yellow silk stockings, carefully preserved, though much faded, and which were adorned with what were then called red clocks.

Claiming to be an officer in the United States Navy, unjustly deprived of command, he ever wore upon his hat the American cockade. On the Fourth of July, and on the day which commemorated the evacuation of the city of New York by the British troops, Landais, who had assumed the title of admiral, invariably dressed himself in his old Continental uniform. The large brass buttons, though they had lost their brilliance, attracted attention. The long skirts of his blue coat reached almost to his heels, enveloping his thin, shrivelled form. The sleeves seemed to have shrunk, for they scarcely came to his wrists. He thus paraded the streets, with all the airs of a nobleman of the ancient regime.



His spirit of independence was such that he refused all presents, even the most trifling. A gentleman, on one occasion, sent him a dozen bottles of Newark cider. He returned them because it was not in his power to reciprocate.

He became, with advancing years, very irritable in temper. In one of the debates in Congress in reference to his claims, a member spoke, as he thought, disrespectfully of him. He dressed himself in his uniform, belted a small sword at his side, and repairing to the gallery of the House, announced to all the acquaintances he met, that he was prepared to fight a duel with any gentleman who might give him occasion to do so. "If there is any bad blood in Congress," said he, "I am prepared to draw it." He always affirmed that he, and not Jones, captured the *Serapis*. The ship, he said, was compelled to surrender because he raked her with the guns of the *Alliance*.

Thus this strange man lived for forty years, until he had attained the age of eighty-seven. He died, or, to use his own language, disappeared from this life, in the summer of 1818. As he was buried in the church-yard of St. Patrick's Cathedral it is probable that he had returned to the Roman Catholic faith. Some unknown friend raised a plain marble slab

over his remains with the inscription, **beneath a cross.**

A la Mémoire  
de  
Pierre de Landais,  
Ancien Contre-Amiral  
au service  
Des Etats-Unis.  
Qui Disparut,  
Juin 1818.  
Age, 87 years.

Let us now return to Paul Jones. There were **five** hundred tons of public stores still at L'Orient to be shipped to the United States. The Ariel, which was in port preparing to sail, could afford additional room for but about one hundred tons. There were thus four hundred tons to be provided for. The Serapis, which Paul Jones had so heroically captured, was one of the finest and most strongly built war-ships in the British navy. The king had just purchased the prize for a sum amounting to about forty thousand dollars. As France was certainly indebted to an American commodore for his valuable prize, and as France was in alliance with America, and as the cause of the two countries was, in some respects, a common cause, France wishing to resist the intolerable **tyranny** of England on the seas, Jones made the **very** reasonable suggestion to Dr. Franklin, that he should **obtain** the loan of the Serapis, to accompany the

Ariel in conveying these stores across the Atlantic. Upon their arrival in America, the two ships, as he thought, might inflict very serious damage on the common enemy. Franklin, deserted by his colleague Lee, mortified by the flight of Landais with the Alliance, and embarrassed for want of money, was in a state of great perplexity. Through irregularity of the mails he had not received Commodore Jones's letter of the 21st of June, giving him the particulars of the departure of the Alliance. He had, however, received his letter of the 27th, proposing the loan of the Serapis. Philosopher as he was, he could not conceal the perplexities which annoyed him. He wrote .

“ I only knew, by other means, that the Alliance is gone out of the port ; and that you are not likely to recover, and have relinquished the command of her. So that affair is over. And now the business is, to get the goods out as well as we can. I am perfectly bewildered with the different schemes that have been proposed to me for this purpose. Mr. Williams was for purchasing ships. I told him I had not the money ; but he still urges it. You and Mr. Ross proposed borrowing the Ariel. I joined in the application for that ship. We obtained her. She was to convey all that the Alliance could not take.

“ Now you find her insufficient. An additional

ship has already been asked and could not be obtained. I think therefore that it will be best that you take as much into the *Ariel* as you can, and depart with it. For the rest I must apply to the government to contrive some means of transporting it in their own ships. This is my present opinion. When I have once got rid of this business, no consideration shall tempt me to meddle again with such matters, as I never understood them."

The stores which were ready to be transported to America, amounted in value to about four hundred thousand dollars. It was needful that immediate and vigorous measures should be taken to send them on their way. Commodore Jones, on the 27th of June, wrote, as in duty bound, to the Honorable Robert Morris, giving him a very unimpassioned and truthful account of the untoward events which had occurred. He closed this admirable letter with the following words:

"I cannot see where all this will end. But surely it must fall dreadfully on the heads of those who have stirred up this causeless mutiny. For my own part I shall make no other remark than that I have never directly or indirectly sought after the command of the *Alliance*. But after having, in obedience to orders, commanded her for seven months, and after Mr. Lee had made a written

application to me, as commander of that ship, for a passage to America, I am at a loss what name to give to Mr. Lee's late conduct and duplicity in stirring up a mutiny in favor of a man who was first sent to America, contrary to Mr. Lee's opinion, by Mr. Deane, and who is actually under arrest by order of his sovereign.

“What gives me the greatest pain is, that after I had obtained from government the means of transporting to America, under good protection, the arms and clothing I have already mentioned, Mr. Lee should have found means to defeat my intentions. You will bear me witness, my worthy friend, that I never asked a favor for myself from Congress. You have seen all my letters, and know that I never sought any indirect influence ; though my ambition to act an eminent and useful part in this glorious revolution is unbounded.

“I pledge myself to you and to America that my zeal receives new ardor from the opposition it meets with ; and I live but to overcome them, and to prove myself no mock patriot, but a true friend to the rights of human nature upon principles of disinterested philanthropy. Of this I have given some proofs, and I will give more. Let not, therefore, the virtuous Senate of America be misled by the insinuations of fallen ambition. Should anything

be said to my disadvantage, all I ask is a suspension of judgment until I can appear before Congress to answer for myself."

The next day after Commodore Jones had written this letter, on the 28th of June, a letter was despatched to him, from Monsieur de Sartines, the French minister, dated at Versailles. He wrote :

"The king, sir, has already made known his satisfaction with the zeal and valor which you have displayed in Europe, in support of the common cause of the United States of America and his majesty ; and he has also informed you of the distinguished proofs he is disposed to give you thereof. Persuaded that the United States will give their consent that you should receive the Cross of the Order of Military Merit, I send you, in the accompanying packet addressed to M. de Luzerne, the one designed for you. You will be pleased to deliver him this packet, and he will see that the honor is conferred by a knight of the order agreeably to his majesty's orders."

Before the Alliance sailed, the trunks of Commodore Jones which were on board that ship were broken open, robbed of their most valuable contents, and sent on shore. Those who openly adhered to Jones, refusing to obey Landais, were confined and carried away in irons. Almost innumerable obstacles arose

to delay the sailing of the *Ariel* and the other vessels needed to transport the stores. Never did a man consecrate himself more entirely to the promotion of the public interests, to the neglect of all selfish considerations, than did Paul Jones during the months of June and July. A detailed account of his difficulties and disappointments would but weary the reader. His soul was almost consumed with the desire to strike the haughty enemy blows which he would feel. He was willing to go back to America, animated by the hope that the government, hearing of what he had already achieved, would place such a force at his command as to enable him to do something effectual toward the emancipation of America from British thralldom. On the 2d of August, just before he was ready to sail, he wrote to the Count of Vergennes. After expressing his gratitude for the favors he had received from the French court, and his intense desire for active employment, he added :

“It is absolutely necessary, my lord, to destroy the foreign commerce of the English, especially their trade to the Baltic, from whence they draw all the supplies for their marine. It is equally necessary to alarm their coasts, not only in the colonies abroad, but even in their islands at home. These things would distress and distract the enemy much more than many battles between fleets of equal force.

“England has carried on the war against America in a far more barbarous form than she durst have adopted against any power of Europe. America has the right to retaliate; and, by our having the same language and customs with the enemy we are in a situation to surprise their coast and take such advantage of their unguarded situation, under the flag of America, as can never be done under the flag of France. This is not theory, for I have proved it by my experience. And if I have opportunity I will yet prove it more fully.”

Still there were the most annoying delays. Nothing in this world can be more difficult than to fit out a military expedition without money and without credit. The *Ariel* sailed out of the harbor and cast anchor in the road of Groix. Commodore Jones received during this time many flattering letters from admiring ladies of the French court. But his engagements were so pressing that he found but little time to reply to them. His instinctive sense of courtesy was such that this apparent neglect sometimes quite seriously annoyed him. To one lady he wrote :

“When one is conscious of having been in fault, I believe it is the best way to confess it and to promise amendment. This being my case in respect to you madam, I am too honest to attempt to excuse



myself; and therefore cast myself at your feet and beg your forgiveness, on condition that I behave better hereafter. For shame, Paul Jones! How could you let the fairest lady in the world, after writing you two letters, wait so long for an answer. Are you so much devoted to war as to neglect wit and beauty? I make myself a thousand such reproaches, and believe I punish myself as severely as you would do, madam, were you present here."

Again he wrote to a noble lady, Madame L'Or-moy: "My particular thanks are due you, madam, for the personal proofs I have received of your esteem and friendship, and for the happiness you procured me in the society of the charming countess and other ladies and gentlemen of your circle. But I have a favor to ask of you, madam, which I hope you will grant me. You tell me, in your letter, that the inkstand I had the honor to present you as a small token of my esteem, shall be reserved for the purpose of writing what concerns me. Now I wish you to see my idea in a more expanded light, and would have you make use of that inkstand to instruct mankind, and support the dignity and rights of human nature.'

## CHAPTER X.

### *The Return to America.*

**Fitting the Ariel.**—Painful Delays.—The Sailing.—Terrible Tempest.—The Disabled Ship.—Puts back to L'Orient.—The Second Departure.—Meets the Triumph.—Bloody Naval Battle.—Perfidious Escape of the Triumph.—The Ariel Reaches America.—Honors Lavished upon Jones.—Appointed to Build and Command the America.—Great Skill Displayed.—The Ship given to France.—The Launch.

TARDILY the French government had ordered the Ariel to be fully armed and equipped. Commodore Jones crowded the ship to its utmost possible capacity. Such a quantity of powder, arms, and other stores were taken on board, that he had room for provisions for only nine weeks. The commodore had hoped to have left port at an earlier period, and at a more favorable season of the year. He was not able to weigh anchor and to spread his sails, for his adventurous voyage, until the 8th of October. He then sailed, with a fair wind and with promise of pleasant weather.

But the very next night a terrible tempest arose. In the midst of midnight darkness, with howling

winds and dashing waves, the *Ariel* barely escaped being wrecked on the rocks of Penmarque, a ledge which was the terror of all seamen, between L'Orient and Brest. The gale was so severe that the lower yard-arms were frequently plunged into the water. The peril was so great that it was necessary to cut away the fore-mast. This seemed in some degree to relieve the ship from the terrible strain, so that her head was brought to the wind. But in the terrible plungings of the heavily laden ship over the billows, the main-mast had got out of the step, and reeled to and fro in the most threatening manner. The danger was imminent that the mast would either break off below the gun-deck, or that it would crush its way through the bottom of the ship. Commodore Jones gave orders for the main-mast to be cut away. But before this could be done the chain plates parted, and the main-mast, breaking off at the gun-deck, fell with a terrible crash, carrying with it the mizzen-mast, and the quarter-gallery. In that deplorable situation, the *Ariel*, rolling like a log upon the tempest-lashed sea, by rare good luck floated in midnight darkness, to the windward of the ledge generally deemed the most dangerous in the world.

For two days and three nights this autumnal storm raged, covering the shore with wrecks, and with the bodies of the drowned. Even in the

port of L'Orient many ships were torn from their anchorage, and were dashed on the shore. Probably nothing saved the Ariel but the loss of her masts. Had they remained standing, to receive the force of the gale, no anchor could have held her from being thrown upon the rocks. Jury-masts were rigged, and the shattered Ariel, after the gale, was taken back to L'Orient. On the 16th, he wrote to Lady D'Ormoy, in reply to a letter from her. In this communication, he said :

“I have returned without laurels, and, what is worse, without being able to render service to the glorious cause of liberty. I know not why Neptune was in such anger, unless he thought it an affront in me to appear on his ocean, with so insignificant a force. It is certain that till the night of the 8th, I did not fully conceive the awful majesty of tempest and of shipwreck. I can give you no just idea of the tremendous scene that nature then presented, which surpassed the reach even of poetic fancy and the pencil. I believe no ship was ever before saved from an equal danger off the point of the Penmarque rocks.

“I am extremely sorry that the young English lady you mention should have imbibed the national hatred against me. I have had proofs that many of the first and finest ladies of that nation are my

friends. Indeed I cannot imagine why any fair lady should be my enemy, since, upon the large scale of universal philanthropy I feel, acknowledge, and bend before the sovereign power of beauty. The English nation may hate me, but I will force them to esteem me too."

Jones was exceedingly distressed that his sailors had not received one single dollar of prize money. They blamed him, and he could not make it clear to their impassioned minds that he was not to blame. The prizes, which had been sent into the French ports, had now been sold. But legal technicalities seemed to render it necessary that the money should be paid in America. Even Dr. Franklin could not deny that such was the proper interpretation of the statute. The money was consequently remitted to the French minister, M. Chaumont, to be forwarded to this country. Commodore Jones wrote pleadingly in behalf of the suffering sailors.

"By virtue of the authority I had received from the government," he wrote, "my honor was pledged to see these men justly paid. I have already suffered many reflections on their account. I beseech your excellency to order them immediate payment."

The spirit of Dr. Franklin was in a state of great perturbation in view of these wrongs, which seemed to paralyze all the sinews of action. From a sick

bed, upon which it is not improbable that trouble had thrown him, he wrote to the Court, strongly soliciting, under the circumstances, the payment of the money. It was not until the 18th of December that the shattered, heavily laden *Ariel* was again prepared for sea. In his journal, Jones writes :

“ On this day I bade adieu to the beloved nation of France ; where, though I have met with some difficulties, I have many reasons to be satisfied. I am charmed with the courteous behavior that so nobly marked the character of that generous minded people.”

As he had important despatches on board, which he was directed to sink rather than allow to fall into the hands of the enemy, and as the cargo he carried was of inestimable value to the colonies, he resolved to seek no prizes, but to cross the ocean as rapidly as possible, by an unfrequented track, taking the southern passage along the edge of the trade winds.

After being out several days he found himself far south, in the latitude of Barbadoes. In a distance a ship hove in sight. There could be but little doubt that it was an English ship. After carefully examining it with his glass he saw that it was a fast-sailing, well-armed English frigate. The *Ariel* was not in a condition to give battle to such an opponent. He hoped, in the darkness of the night

to escape. He therefore changed his course and spread every sail. In the morning he found, much to his disappointment, that the frigate was still nearer to him than the evening before.

An action was now unavoidable. The frigate would surely board him, and, by examining his papers, find out who he was and where he was bound. Immediately the most vigorous measures were adopted to prepare for action. It is probable that Commodore Jones had resolved never, under whatever circumstances, to surrender to the British flag. Everything was thrown overboard which could interfere with the efficiency of the defence. The sails and helm were so managed, and other precautions adopted, as to conceal, as far as possible, the force of the Ariel. He assumed the character of a merchant-ship lightly armed.

The chase soon became very eager. As soon as the frigate came within gun-shot of the Ariel, Jones opened fire from his quarter-deck, with his stern chasers. The wind became very light, so that hour after hour, on these mild tropical seas, the pursued and the pursuer glided along, without the distance between them being sensibly diminished.

As night approached the frigate came within hailing distance of the Ariel. Jones, as he examined her armament, was well pleased to find that he had

a force to contend with not much superior to his own. He immediately raised the English flag, and quite a conversation took place between the commanders of the two ships. Jones learned that the frigate was called the Triumph, under command of Captain John Pindar. Assuming that the Ariel was an English ship conveying stores to the British army in America, he obtained very important information, in reference to the position of the English squadron on the coast.

At length Jones pretended not to believe Captain Pindar, that his ship belonged to the British navy. He therefore ordered the captain to come on board the Ariel and show his commission. Pindar probably at this time had his suspicions excited. He declined upon the excuse that his boats leaked, and that he had not yet learned the name of the frigate before him, or of her commander. Jones replied :

“ I have no account to render to you. You can have five minutes to decide whether you will come on board of me or not.”

Jones held his watch in his hand. The frigates were lying nearly abreast and within thirty feet of each other. The tops of both vessels were filled with sharp-shooters, and the gunners, with lighted matches, stood at the batteries. The moment the five minutes had elapsed, Jones ran up the Stars and Stripes,



and hurled a full broadside, within pistol-shot, into the *Triumph*. It was then past seven o'clock in the evening. Daylight had completely faded away. Starlight and the flash of the guns alone lighted the combatants in their dreadful conflict. The crew of the *Ariel* was inspired with the indomitable energies of its commander.

The *Triumph* instantly returned the fire of the *Ariel*. It is said that the vigorous and regular fire, from the top and batteries of the *Ariel*, had never been exceeded. Such a conflict could by no possibility last long. The flash and the roar of this tempest of war were incessant. Every bolt was death dealing. The massive iron balls tore through and splintered the oaken timbers, smashed gun carriages, tumbled about the massive ordnance, and strewed the decks with lifeless bodies and dismembered limbs. There was not one moment's intermission. Blow followed blow instantaneously. Amidst darkness and sulphurous smoke, and the angry gleam of the flashing guns, there were ghastly wounds, and gushing blood, and death—misery and inconceivably awful ruin. It was one of those scenes in this lost world, which has led many to inquire, "Can hell exceed this?"

Ten minutes of this horrible carnage settled the question. Pindar struck his colors and cried out for

quarter, saying that one half of his men were killed. Instantly the Ariel stopped fire. The men, abandoning the batteries and running down from the tops, clustered on the deck, and gave three cheers in token of their victory. When a ship thus surrenders, and calls for and accepts quarter, she is considered as a prisoner of war is considered, who has given his word of honor not to attempt to escape. With a few more broadsides Jones might have sunk the Triumph, which was preying upon American commerce. And it was his duty to have done this, rather than allow her to escape.

But relying upon the honor of the English commander, he accepted the unconditional surrender. The Triumph was not injured in her sails or rigging. In the confusion of the moment, when the dead covered the decks and the wounded were being hurried below to the care of the surgeon, and the guns of the Ariel were abandoned, the treacherous captain, watching his opportunity, suddenly spread every sail, and commenced running away with all speed. Jones was astonished at this perfidy. He immediately spread every sail in pursuit. But the Triumph was much the swiftest sailor, and soon got out of gun-shot, and disappeared in the darkness. In the account which Commodore Jones gives of this conflict, in the journal which he sent to the king of France, he wrote :

“In a minute I ordered the firing to cease. And there were several huzzahs on board the Ariel, as is usual after a victory. But a minute afterwards the captain of the Triumph had the baseness to fill his sails and run away. It was not in my power to prevent this, the Triumph sailing much faster than the Ariel. But if the British government had that feeling of honor and justice which becomes a great nation, they would have delivered up to the United States that frigate as belonging to them; and would have punished, in the most exemplary manner, her captain for having thus violated the laws of war and the customs of civilized nations.”

On the 18th of February, 1781, Paul Jones arrived at Philadelphia, having been absent from America three years, three months, and eighteen days. He now received what was to him an ample reward for his past years of toil and care. The renown of his exploits had spread through the land. No one in the army or the navy had acquired more celebrity. Even Mr. Lee, who had now himself quarrelled with Landais, and had become convinced that he was insane, joined in the laudations of Commodore Jones. The Board of Admiralty condemned the course of Mr. Lee, and sustained Jones. In a report which the Board made to Congress, on the 2d of November, 1781, it was said

“It appears that Captain Landais regained command of the Alliance by the advice of Mr. Lee, notwithstanding his suspension by Dr. Franklin, who, by the direction of the Marine Committee, had the sole management of our marine affairs in Europe.”

Congress had already passed a resolve, stating, “That the thanks of the United States, in Congress assembled, be given to Captain John Paul Jones, for the zeal, prudence, and intrepidity, with which he has supported the honor of the American flag; for his bold and successful enterprises to redeem from captivity the citizens of these States, who had fallen under the power of the enemy; and, in general, for the good conduct and eminent services by which he has added lustre to his character and to the American arms.”

General Washington, with his customary circumspection, wrote to him: “Whether our naval affairs have, in general, been well or ill conducted, would be presumptuous in me to determine. Instances of bravery and good conduct, in several of our officers, have not, however, been wanting. Delicacy forbids me to mention that particular one which has attracted the admiration of all the world, and which has influenced the most illustrious monarch to confer a mark of his favor, which can only be

obtained by long and honorable service, or by the performance of some brilliant action."

The warm-hearted Marquis de Lafayette wrote, in much more glowing terms, to his old friend. He was just on the point of sailing for France. His letter was dated on the *Alliance*, off Boston, December 22d, 1781.

"I have been honored with your polite favor, my dear Paul Jones, but before it reached me I was already on board the *Alliance*, and was every minute expecting to put to sea. As to the pleasure to take you by the hand, my dear Paul Jones, you know my affectionate sentiments, and my very great regard for you, so that I need not add anything on that subject.

"Accept my best thanks for the kind expressions in your letter. The downfall of Cornwallis is a great event; and the greater as it was equally and amicably shared by the two allied nations. Your coming to the army I had the honor to command, would have been considered as a very flattering compliment to one who loves you and knows your worth. I am impatient to hear that you are ready to sail. And I am of opinion that we ought to unite, under you, every Continental ship we can muster, with such a body of well-appointed marines as might cut a good figure ashore and then give you plenty of

provisions, and *carte blanche*. I am sorry I cannot see you. I have also many things to tell you."

Honorable John Adams wrote him, from the Hague. In this letter he said: "Could I see a prospect of half-a-dozen line-of-battle ships, under the American flag, commanded by Commodore Paul Jones, engaged with an equal British force, I apprehend the event would be so glorious for the United States, and lay so sure a foundation for their prosperity, that it would be a rich compensation for the continuance of the war."

Commodore Jones was summoned to appear before Congress to answer a large number of questions, which had been carefully drawn up, in reference to the delay of the stores in Europe, and the many other difficulties in the marine which had occurred there. His answers were so full and satisfactory as to draw from Congress the most cordial approval of his course. In the complimentary resolves it was added:

"That the Minister Plenipotentiary of these United States, at the Court of Versailles, communicated to his most Christian Majesty the high satisfaction Congress has received from the conduct and gallant behavior of Captain John Paul Jones, which have merited the attention and approbation of his most Christian Majesty; and that his majesty's offer

of adorning Captain Jones with a Cross of Military Merit, is highly acceptable to Congress."

Congress at that time held its sessions in Philadelphia. The French minister, M. de la Luzerne, gave a very brilliant fête to all the members of Congress. In the presence of that august body, with imposing ceremonials, he conferred upon Jones, in the name of the King of France, the honor he so richly merited.

Congress commenced building, under the supervision of Commodore Jones, a very splendid seventy-four-gun ship, to be called the America. By unanimous vote of Congress, Captain Jones was intrusted with the command. For sixteen months he devoted his tireless energies to building this ship, with which he could bid defiance to any single ship in the British navy, and which would enable him to render really efficient service to his country.

While abroad he had collected copies of all the important treatises upon naval tactics; upon the construction of ships, the police of fleets and dock-yards, and every other branch of his noble profession. Every moment of leisure was devoted to these studies. He became an enthusiastic student, resolved to make himself as perfect as possible in all the accomplishments of his noble profession. And it is safe to

say that there was not, in our navy, any officer more thoroughly instructed.

On the birth of the Dauphin, the unfortunate son of Louis XVI. and Maria Antoinette, Commodore Jones mounted, on the deck of the unfinished ship *America*, a battery, at his own expense. The flag of France was unfurled from the mast-head, and salutes were fired at repeated hours during the day. At night the ship was illuminated, and there was a brilliant display of fireworks.

Jones obtained great credit with both American and French officers for the skill he displayed in the construction of this ship. It was fifty and a-half feet in breadth, and one hundred and eighty-two and a-half feet in length. The best judges pronounced her to be a model of naval architecture. It was the largest seventy-four-gun ship then in the world. And yet she floated so gracefully that, at the distance of a mile, she appeared like a delicate frigate; and no one would have suspected that she had a second battery.

The embarrassments which Jones experienced, and the delays to which he was exposed in building, arming, and rigging this admirable structure, were innumerable. Money, first of all, was wanted; suitable workmen were with difficulty found, and he never had more than twenty-four carpenters em-



ployed. Our machinery and manufactures were not in a sufficiently advanced state to furnish proper material for the rigging, and suitable armament for a first-class ship. Nearly all such stores were to be brought from Europe. The ships which brought them had to run the gauntlet through the powerful fleet of England.

There probably was not another man, then in the United States, capable of doing what Commodore Jones did in building this ship. It is to be remembered that the whole population of the United States, widely scattered, amounted to but about three millions, about the same as the present population of the State of New York. For such a little band to bid defiance to the majestic power of England was one of the boldest deeds ever performed. We should inevitably have been crushed but for the aid of our generous ally.

About the middle of August Jones left Philadelphia for Portsmouth, New Hampshire, where the ship was being built. On the way he visited the allied army under General Washington and the French General Rochambeau, then encamped at White Plains, in Westchester county, New York. There was scarcely any name then more prominent in the army and the navy than that of Paul Jones. He was received by the officers of both armies with

flattering distinction. In addition to his merits as a brave warrior he was an intelligent, courteous, accomplished gentleman—one whose upright and elevated character commanded universal respect. He reached Portsmouth near the middle of September. There was everything to discourage him. The resources of the country seemed to be exhausted, and but a small portion of the materials for building the ship had been purchased.

But Commodore Jones plunged into the great enterprise with all his thoughtful and intelligent energies. No time was wasted in useless repinings. He was intensely anxious for active service. Superintending work in the ship-yard was not congenial employment for him, when he longed to be upon the deck of his ship humbling, by his broadsides, that proud power which was stigmatizing the officers in the United States Navy as traitors, pirates, and thieves. During these weary months he was, however, cheered by the conviction that he would soon unfurl his flag on board the *America*; and that then, with a combined French and American squadron, he would strike blows which would compel the British government to respect the rights of humanity.

Before Commodore Jones commenced work on the *America*, he had quite despaired of obtaining

another ship. In his eagerness to be actively employed in working out the redemption of his adopted country from British thralldom, he contemplated entering the army, to serve in the corps of Lafayette. The English naval officers heard of the building of the America, and were anxious to destroy her before she could put to sea. They had formed various plans, which were communicated by Washington to Commodore Jones. Ships were cruising off the harbor of Portsmouth, and a fleet of armed boats was to be sent in at night, to apply the torch.

Jones organized an armed guard for the protection of the America. It was necessary for him to employ in this service the mechanics who were engaged in building the ship. Jones himself frequently took command of this guard, and carefully drilled them in the art of defence. They were thoroughly drilled, and had several pieces of cannon which they were taught to manage with great skill. They were prepared to give a very warm reception to any assailants. Several times, in the dim starlight, crowded boats were seen, pulling silently into the harbor with muffled oars. But the defences were so formidable that they never ventured to make an attack.

It was near the close of 1782 when the ship was nearly completed and ready for launching. Jones

now felt that he was soon to reap the reward of his long and painful labors. And then came a sudden, unexpected, terrible disappointment. A squadron of French line-of-battle ships, coming over to our aid, entered Boston harbor. One of the finest of these ships, the *Magnifique*, stranded, and was entirely lost. As they had come to assist us, Congress justly regarded the ship as lost in our service. To indemnify the King of France for this loss, and to show our gratitude to our allies, it was at once voted to present the *America* to the King of France. Thus again, in a moment, were all the brightest hopes of Paul Jones dashed.

It was the duty of Honorable Robert Morris, agent of Marine, to communicate this intelligence to the Chevalier Paul Jones. He evidently recoiled from the unwelcome task. In his kind and sympathetic letter he said :

“ I know you so well as to be convinced that it must give you great pain, and I sincerely sympathize with you. But although you will undergo much concern at being deprived of this opportunity to reap laurels on your favorite field, yet your regard for France will in some measure alleviate it. I must entreat you to continue your inspection until she is launched, and to urge forward the business. When that is done, if you will come hither I will explain to

you the reasons which led to this measure, and my views for employing you in the service of your country."

The answer of Commodore Jones was worthy of the man. There were few who could have received so terrible a blow so meekly, and with so much dignity. Honorable Robert Morris acknowledged the receipt of his reply in a letter, which justice to Commodore Jones demands should be given in full. It was as follows :

"MARINE OFFICE, October 9th, 1782.

"CHEVALIER PAUL JONES, Portsmouth.

"SIR—I have received your letter of the 22d of last month. The sentiments contained in it will always reflect the highest honor upon your character. They have made so strong an impression upon my mind that I immediately transmitted an extract of your letter to Congress. I doubt not but that they will view it in the manner which I have done.

"I am, etc.,

"ROBERT MORRIS.

Mr. Morris wrote, in his letter to the President of Congress: "I do myself the honor to enclose your excellency the copy of a letter which I received this morning from the Chevalier Paul Jones. The present state of our affairs does not permit me to employ

that valuable officer; and I confess that it is with no small degree of concern that I consider the little probability of rendering his talents useful to that country which he has already so faithfully served, and with so great disinterestedness. I should do injustice to my own feelings as well as to my country, if I did not most warmly recommend this gentleman to the notice of Congress, whose favor he has certainly merited by the most signal services and sacrifices."

Jones continued faithfully superintending the completion of the *America*, until she was launched, on the 5th of November. It was necessary to build this ship where she could be protected from the assaults of the British navy. It was anticipated, by many, that the launching would be attended with great difficulty. Commodore Jones attended to the minutest details with wonderful skill.

The river was not more than two hundred yards wide. On one side of the building slip there was a ledge of rocks, running half-way across the river, and parallel to the direction of the ship's keel. The opposite shore was fringed with rocks. The tide rushed in and out with great rapidity. It was necessary to launch near flood-tide, when the current was very rapid. There was much danger that the ship might be swept against the ledge. This could

**only** be obviated by cables and anchors secured on the shore. With great ingenuity, these were so arranged as to check the speed of the ship, and bring her to a stand at a particular spot.

The flags of France and America were blended in friendly union at the stern. Jones took his stand on a platform, near the bows of the ship. He gave every signal ; watched every movement, and ordered when the anchors at the bows were, in succession, to be let go. Beautifully, majestically, successfully, the vast fabric glided into its native element. The admiration of the thousands of spectators was announced in enthusiastic cheers.

On the same day Chevalier Jones gracefully surrendered the America to Chevalier de Martigne, who had commanded the *Magnifique*. The next morning, again out of employment, he set out for Philadelphia, to seek new engagements in the service of his country

## CHAPTER XI.

### *The War Ended.*

~~FROM~~ SOUTH CAROLINA.—A New Disappointment.—The Great Expedition ~~failed~~.—Magnitude of the Squadron.—The Appointed ~~Kentucky~~.—Commodore Jones Joins the Expedition.—His Cordial Reception.—Great Difficulties and Embarrassments.—The ~~Kentucky~~ at Port Cabella.—Tidings of Peace.—Return to America.—New Mission to France.

HONORABLE ROBERT MORRIS wished to give Commodore Jones command of a large, strongly built frigate called the South Carolina, then in the service of that State. This was the ship built at Amsterdam, called the Indian, the command of which was promised to him when he went to Europe. Either from the inability of the commissioners to pay for the ship, or from the remonstrances of England that a ship should be built in a neutral court to aid her insurgent colonies, the object was defeated. In some way the King of France came in possession of the ship, and having at that time no special use for it he loaned it to one of the prominent members of his court, the Chevalier de Luxembourg. He loaned it to South Carolina for three years, to guard her



coasts, on condition that he should receive one-fourth of the proceeds of her prizes. It was placed under the command of Commodore Gillon, who, with a small fleet, was to protect the harbors of the State. He changed the name to the South Carolina.

It was an uncommonly fast and formidable ship. Congress was anxious to get possession of it. As the Chevalier de Luxembourg had received no payment, though many prizes had been taken, he was dissatisfied, and very justly deemed the contract annulled. He therefore authorized the French minister at Philadelphia to coöperate with Mr. Morris in obtaining the surrender of the ship to the United States. Gillon heard of these movements, and escaped the legal process for seizing the ship, by suddenly putting to sea.

The South Carolina had but just cleared the Capes of Delaware, when she was pounced upon and captured by three English frigates, the Diomedé, the Astrea, and the Quebec, which had been stationed there to intercept her. Thus again were the hopes of Commodore Jones blighted. He had fully expected to take command of the South Carolina. It was certainly from no fault of his own that he was disappointed.

A French fleet of ten sail of the line was then at

Boston, on the eve of sailing for the West Indies. It was there to unite with a combined French and Spanish fleet, under Count d'Estaing. This formidable squadron, consisting of seventy vessels in all, with a strong land force, was to make a descent on the island of Jamaica, and wrest it from the English. Jones earnestly applied for permission to embark in this expedition. Ever eager to learn, and ever modestly conscious that he had much to learn, he hoped thus to become practically acquainted with the evolution of fleets on a scale so grand. His enthusiasm was aroused at the idea of witnessing so sublime a naval display. He also hoped, from his intimate acquaintance with those seas, to be able to render eminent assistance to Count d'Estaing.

Mr. Morris applied to Congress, in behalf of Commodore Jones, that permission might be given him to join the expedition. In a very complimentary letter he wrote :

“ His present desire, to be sent with Count d'Estaing, consists with all his former conduct. And it will, I dare say, be a very pleasing reflection to Congress that he is about to pursue a knowledge of his profession, so as to become still more useful, if ever he should be again called to the command of a squadron or a fleet.”

Congress passed a very flattering resolve, grant

ing his request, and especially recommending him to his excellency the Marquis de Vaudreuil. The commodore immediately repaired to Boston, where he was received by the marquis with every mark of attention. Though the flag-ship of the marquis, the *Triomphante*, was crowded, and sixty officers sat daily at his table, Commodore Jones was received on board that ship, and was assigned lodgings corresponding with those of Vaudreuil. The splendors of the court of Louis XVI. still lingered around the court and camp of Louis XVI.

Nearly all the officers of the French army and navy were men of illustrious birth, intelligent, chivalric, high-bred gentlemen. In this society Jones, himself a courtly and well-educated man, found congenial companionship. He was a man of pure lips and refined bearing, fond of cultivated female society, and instinctively recoiling from all coarseness and vulgarity. He was esteemed a very valuable acquisition to the enterprise. His modest, friendly spirit, united with his unrivalled intrepidity, won the affection of the officers and the homage of the crew. The fact was also recognized that there was not, on board the fleet, a single man so intimately acquainted with those seas, and particularly with the island of Jamaica, as he was. Jones was highly pleased with the opportunity of improvement thus presented him.

and with the very kind manner in which he had been received. In his journal he wrote, with characteristic modesty :

“ As the Marquis d’Estaing had commanded a fleet of more than seventy sail of the line, I had the flattering hope of finding myself in the first military school in the world ; in which I should be able to render myself useful, and to acquire knowledge very important for conducting great military operations.”

The squadron, consisting of ten sail of the line, left Boston on the 24th of December, 1782. The course of the ships was directed toward the mouth of Portsmouth harbor, where they were to be joined by two other ships of the line, the *Auguste* and the *Pluton*. But a severe wintry storm arose, with freezing gales and snow, and drove the squadron far away to the vicinity of the Bay of Fundy. Here the fleet was for a time in imminent danger from its proximity to the land and to vast fields of floating ice.

Many of the vessels were lost sight of in the storm. The Marquis de Vaudreuil steered to the southward, to an appointed rendezvous in the harbor of St. John, on the island of Porto Rico. As he made the land he was informed that sixteen British men-of-war, under Admiral Hood, were cruising

off Cape Francois, on the look-out for him ; and that a still larger naval force, under Admiral Pigot, was watching for him at Lucca, one of the extreme western towns of the island of Jamaica. England had made such ample preparation for this anticipated assault ; that it was thought that the French squadron must fall a prey, either to Hood or Pigot.

Vaudreuil remained at St. John, Porto Rico, ten days, waiting the arrival of other vessels of his fleet. Here he performed all kinds of naval evolutions, as a general on land would review his army. He also found at this place a very ample supply from France, to replenish his stores. The island of Porto Rico, which lies off the eastern coast of St. Domingo, is about one hundred and thirty miles in length, by thirty miles in breadth.

The strait, but eighty miles wide, which separates it from San Domingo, is called the Mona Passage. The island was then in a state of prosperity, and it carried on very extensive commerce with France and Spain. It at that time belonged to Spain, and contained a population of about eighty thousand. The native inhabitants had all melted away. The principal city, St. John, enjoyed a very fine harbor, and had a population of about thirty thousand.

The marquis convoyed, with his fleet, sixteen

French merchant vessels from the eastern to the western end of the island, along the northern coast. The general rendezvous, for the French and Spanish fleet, had been appointed, with the greatest secrecy, at a little island called Port Cabello, but a few miles off the extreme northern coast of Venezuela. Some light vessels of Admiral Hood's squadron, which were cruising as scouts, caught sight of the French fleet in the Mona passage. They immediately ran back with the tidings that the fleet was coasting along the southern shore of the San Domingo.

But Vaudreuil suddenly turned his direction south, sailed down between two and three hundred miles to the unfrequented islands which are scattered along the northern shore of Venezuela. The little island of Port Cabello was about sixty miles west of the much better known island of Curaçoa. A great expedition of this kind is liable to innumerable hindrances. It can never succeed, unless there is some imperial, Napoleonic mind, which can appreciate all its grandeur, and at the same time can regulate all its minutest details. Such enterprises render a dictatorship, for that purpose, indispensable. A ship of war, an army, a fleet, must be under dictatorial power.

But here was a squadron of more than seventy vessels to be gathered from several ports in the

United States, from wide dispersion on the cruising grounds of an intense naval warfare, from several ship-yards of Spain and France, exposed to storms, to shipwreck, to misunderstood orders, to delays in equipping the ships, to the antagonisms and jealousies of rival officers, and to meet, at an almost unknown island, thousands of miles from the place of departure of each ship.

The fleet of the Marquis de Vaudreuil was swept, by the trade winds and the strong current of the Gulf Stream, sixty miles west of Port Cabello. It required three toilsome weeks to recover this distance, beating against wind and tide. The accompanying transports, being heavily laden merchant ships, and not fleet sailors, bearing stores of provisions and ammunition and many land troops, were unable to recover the lost space, against wind and flood. After many ineffectual attempts they were compelled to relinquish the endeavor. They left the squadron, and bore away to the coast of San Domingo.

One of the finest of the war-ships, the *Burgoyne*, of seventy-four guns, in a dark and stormy night, ran upon a rock, and was totally lost, with two hundred of her crew. On the 18th of February, 1783 the *Triomphante* reached Port Cabello. The *Auguste* and *Pluton*, which had been separated from the fleet by the storm, near the Bay of Fundy, had

arrived a few days before. Soon after, the remaining war-ships of the squadron, one after another, came in.

The Spanish fleet was to sail from Havana, under command of Don Salano. He had promised to be at the rendezvous punctually. But he did not keep his word. Probably some pique stood in the way. Nothing was seen of him, or heard from him. The Spanish government was dissatisfied with his course, ordered him home, and another was placed in command.

The large combined force, of French and Spanish ships, was to sail from Cadiz, in the extreme south of Spain, under Count d'Estaing. At Port Cabello, he was to take command of the whole expedition. But just as the fleet was on the eve of sailing, the British government, alarmed by the little success which had attended its efforts thus far, the enormous expense which the conflict involved, the loss of all its trade with the colonies, the interruption of its commerce throughout the world, and more than all by the clamor of popular indignation, which rose, in England, against the unrighteous war it was waging, which clamor would make itself heard in the House of Commons and the House of Lords, very reluctantly felt constrained to consider terms of peace. It was decided to defer the sail.



ing of the fleet till the result of the negotiations could be ascertained. Thus when Vaudreuil was hourly looking for the arrival of his whole squadron at Port Cabello, his transports were distant four hundred miles at Cape Francois, in San Domingo. The Spanish squadron, under Don Solano, was distant nearly fifteen hundred miles in Havana ; while the great combined fleet of France and Spain, under D'Estaing, was quietly reposing, at the distance of many thousand miles, in the harbor of Cadiz.

The last thing at night, the officers at Cabello were seen at the mast-heads of the ships, ranging the horizon with their glasses, in search of the expected fleets. The earliest dawn of the morning found them again upon the eager, anxious look-out. Thus the remainder of February, and the whole of the month of March passed sadly away. Not a sail was seen to break the outline where the ocean and the sky seemed to meet. The anxiety of the officers became intense. Their decks were blistered beneath the heat of a tropical sun. The climate was insalubrious. There was nothing in their surroundings to cheer them. The disappointment was terrible. The officers who had embarked on the enterprise with high ambition, anticipating renowned achievements and unfading laurels, saw all their hopes vanishing, and that the ridicule of the com-

munity, instead of its plaudits, would attend their return. Such is life :

“ A path it is of joys and griefs, of many hopes and fears,  
Gladdened at times by sunny smiles, but oftener dimmed by tears.’

Serious sickness broke out, which seized alike officers and crew. Commodore Jones was attacked with intermittent fever, which seemed to paralyze his physical energies, leaving his mental powers in all their activity. On the 27th of February, the evening before his arrival at Port Cabello, he wrote to the Duke de la Rochefoucauld, saying :

“ The English affairs seem in so bad a situation in the East Indies, that I think even the most sanguine among them can expect no manner of advantage for continuing the war. As Spain has, at last, wisely abandoned the siege of Gibraltar, and, as we are told, doubled her ships with copper, I cannot think the English so blind as not to see the great risk they run of being as effectually humbled by sea, as they are by land, should they neglect the present moment to make their peace. I most ardently wish for peace, for humanity tells me there has been too much blood spilt already. I am in hopes to have the happiness, soon after the war, to revisit France.”

The same day he wrote to Honorable Mr. Morris as follows : “ I have already received much useful in-

formation, since I embarked, and am on such happy terms with the admiral and officers, both of the fleet and army, that I have nothing to wish from them. Deeply sensible how favored I am in being thus placed, I beg you to express my gratitude to Congress on the occasion, and to the Chevalier de Luzerne. The Marquis de Vaudreuil is promoted to the rank of lieutenant-general, and now carries a vice-admiral's flag."

On the 25th of March Jones wrote to Lafayette, who had received from the king military promotion. In this letter he wrote:

"I am really happy to hear that justice has been rendered, by his majesty, to such distinguished worth and exertion as yours. No less indeed could be expected from such a prince to such a subject. We hear that you are at Cadiz, in order to embark with his excellency Count d'Estaing. This would afford me the greatest pleasure, did not my love of glory give place to my more ardent wish for peace, and that you might have the happiness to carry over the olive branch, to a country that already owes you so much gratitude.

"Humanity has need of peace; but though I was led to expect it from the late speech from the throne, I begin to fear it is yet at some distance. There seems to be a malignity in the English blood, which

cannot be cured till, in mercy to the rest of mankind, it is let out, that the disease may not become epidemical. I pray you to present my most respectful compliments to the Count d'Estaing. If the war continues, I hope for the honor of making the campaign under his orders."

Early in April a solitary ship was seen in the distant horizon. Her approach was watched with the most intense eagerness. She entered the harbor with floating banners and triumphant music and shouts of peace. She conveyed the tidings of the treaty which brought the dreadful war to a close. There were but few Americans in the fleet. Their joy must have been great, that their country had successfully fought the battles of freedom, and had at length escaped from the grasp of the oppressor. We know not with what emotions the French received the tidings which convinced them that the naval campaign in which they had anticipated such great results had proved so serious a failure.

Commodore Jones was weary of war. He ever abhorred those atrocities inevitably involved in what Napoleon I. has called "The science of barbarians." Just before the sailing of the fleet he thought he saw indications that peace was not far distant. There was quite a sum of money due to him from France, whose remittance he was daily expecting. There

was a farm house and an extensive tract of excellent land for sale near Newark, New Jersey. It had been valued at forty thousand dollars. But property had so depreciated during the war, and money was so scarce, that it was now seeking a purchaser at ten thousand dollars. Commodore Jones, with his humane feelings, literary taste, and yearnings for the joys of domestic life, was anxious to purchase this property. He wrote accordingly, on the 24th of December, 1782, intrusting the business to his friend John Ross, Esq.

But the money did not come. The purchase was not made. Jones was far away in the harbor of Port Cabello. He had received no response to his letter, and did not even know whether his agent had ever received it. In this uncertainty he again wrote to Mr. Ross, from Port Cabello, on the 16th of March 1783. After briefly recapitulating the contents of his former letter he added :

“As New York will probably be one of our first naval ports, the proximity of that estate made me more desirous to own it. If, therefore, you should find, on inquiry, that I have been rightly informed, and if you can turn the merchandise in your hands into money, to answer for the purchase, I pray you to act for me as you would for yourself on the occasion.

‘We have as yet no certain news from Europe. If the peace should, as I wish it may, be concluded, I wish to establish myself on a place I can call my own, and offer my hand to some fair daughter of liberty. If, on the contrary, Count d’Estaing should come out with fifty sail of the line, copper sheathed, and eighteen thousand troops, I shall have instructions at the greatest military school in the world.’

The satisfaction of Jones, upon the establishment of peace, and the independence of the land of his adoption, appears to have been unqualified. He immediately wrote to a friend :

‘The most brilliant success, and the most instructive experience in war could not have given me a pleasure comparable with that which I received, when I learned that Great Britain had, after so long a contest, been forced to acknowledge the independence and sovereignty of the United States of America.’

Nothing can be more evident, in the whole career of Commodore Jones, than that he fought not from the love of war, but to secure for America an honorable peace. Immediately upon the receipt of the intelligence of the treaty, the little squadron weighed anchor, and sailed for Cape Francois, upon the island of San Domingo. After a passage of eight days the cape was reached on the 16th of the

month. Here Commodore Jones, though still suffering from an intermittent fever, took leave of his friends, and embarked for Philadelphia. It is manifest that he had commanded warmly the esteem of all his associates, by his upright and noble character. The Marquis de Vaudreuil wrote to Chevalier de la Luzerne, the French minister in America, as follows. The letter was dated at Cape Francois, April 20th, 1783.

“The peace, which has been so much desired, and which is going to make the happiness of America, since it puts a seal to her liberty, terminates our projects. We shall sail for France in a week, with the troops under command of Baron de Viomenil. Mr. Paul Jones, who embarked with me, is about returning to his dear country. His well-deserved reputation had made him very acceptable to me, not doubting but that we should have had some opportunities in which his talents might have shone forth. But peace, of which I cannot but be glad, puts an obstacle in the way; so we must part. Permit me, sir, to request of you the favor of recommending him to his superiors. The intimate acquaintance which I made with him since he has been on board the *Triomphante*, makes me take a lively interest in what concerns him; and I shall be very much

**obliged** if you will find means of being **serviceable** to him."

It will be remembered that Paul Jones had been assigned a room on board the crowded *Triomphante*, with Baron de Viomenil, who was in command of the land forces. The baron, for five months, was in the most intimate relation with Jones. No one could have a better opportunity of ascertaining his true character. He wrote as follows, to the French ambassador at Philadelphia:

"Mr. Paul Jones, who will have the honor of delivering to you, sir, this letter, has for five months deported himself among us with such wisdom and modesty as add infinitely to the reputation gained by his courage and exploits. I have reason to believe that he had preserved as much the feeling of gratitude and attachment toward France, as of patriotism and devotion to the cause of America. Such being his titles to attention, I take the liberty of recommending to you his interests near the President and Congress."

Viomenil also wrote the Honorable Mr. Morris, in high commendation of Paul Jones, and expressing his desires for the prosperity of "*ce brave et honnête homme*."

Jones appeared in Philadelphia on the 18th of May, 1783. He was still suffering from fever and



his constitution was greatly shattered by the hardships he had experienced. He therefore retired, for the recovery of his health, to the beautiful little Moravian village of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, about sixty miles northwest of Philadelphia, on the banks of the Lehigh river. Here he passed the summer, resting from his toils and employing his time in those literary and scientific studies which ever deeply interested him.

His health being much improved, he was appointed on the 1st of November, 1783, an agent of the United States Government to collect the amount of money for prizes taken, in Europe, by vessels under his command. The ships had been sold, and the money had gone into the French treasury, and was not yet paid. The question was full of embarrassing complications. Several years had elapsed since the prizes were captured. The sailors who had taken them were scattered in all parts of the world, and many were dead. Was the distribution of the prizes to be adjudged according to French law, or American law? and these laws were very different. The *Bon Homme Richard* was a French ship, purchased and armed at the expense of the French court, and entitled to raise alike the French or American flag. What proportion of the prizes she took belonged to France, and what to America?

It is manifest that, in carrying claims involving such embarrassments through any court or Congress, there was a fine opportunity for years of diplomatic struggles. It was in the autumn of 1779, that the prizes were taken by the *Bon Homme Richard*. Four years had since elapsed, and yet nothing had been done toward the settlement of the distribution of the prize-money. There was not another man in the world so well qualified to manage this difficult and delicate business as was Commodore Jones.

He was personally familiar with all the facts in the case. By midnight studies he had made himself thoroughly acquainted with the naval code of all the European nations. He was well known in the court of France and was very highly esteemed, alike by the monarch, his cabinet officers, and the people. And in addition to all this he was a well-bred gentleman, who scorned all trickery, who would make no claim which he did not honestly believe to be just, and who, while unyielding in his righteous demand, was ever courteous and gentle in his bearing. Even Arthur Lee was one of the committee who recommended to Congress that this all-important commission should be assigned to Commodore Jones. As it was expected that a large sum of money would be placed in his hands, he was required to give bonds, to the amount of two hundred thousand dollars, in pledge

of his faithful administration of the trust. It is evidence of the high esteem with which he was regarded by the leading men of the nation, that he found no difficulty in obtaining bondsmen.

On the 10th of November, Jones sailed from Philadelphia, in the ship *Washington*. After a stormy wintry passage of twenty days, the ship, instead of making the French harbor of Havre, baffled by head winds in the Channel, ran into the English port of Plymouth. As Mr. Jones had important despatches for John Adams, then our minister at the court of St. James, he travelled post to London. Mr. Adams, after examining his documents, informed Commodore Jones that the despatches with which he was intrusted to Dr. Franklin, in Paris, probably contained authorization for Adams and Franklin to conclude a commercial treaty with England.

It required a journey and voyage of five days for Jones to traverse the distance between London and Paris. Franklin received his old friend with great cordiality. Marshal de Castries was Minister of Marine, Count de Vergennes occupied another of the most important positions in the government. They both received Paul Jones with all those flattering attentions which render French society so fascinating. The Chevalier Luzerne had written to them both from Philadelphia, affectionately com-

mending Paul Jones to their kind regards. With true French politeness they informed him that they had received such letters, but that they were entirely unnecessary.

"We have no need of letters," they said, "to inform us of the merits of Commodore Jones, or to influence us to do him justice."

There are different ways of doing things in this world; and certainly the courteous way is the most agreeable. England had denounced Commodore Jones as a pirate. Had England captured him, it is not improbable that he might have been hung like a pirate. Captain Pearson, who commanded the *Serapis* in the encounter with the *Bon Homme Richard*, was a brave man, perhaps a humane man, but coarse and vulgar, quite unacquainted with the courtesies which regulate the intercourse of gentleman. As he presented his sword to Commodore Jones, the unmanly Briton said:

"It is with great reluctance that I surrender my sword to a man who fights with a halter about his neck!"

What reply should the commodore make to such an insult, which Pearson probably regarded merely as British pluck? Should he strike his unarmed and helpless prisoner? Should he soil his

lips in a contest of blackguardism? His reply was noble.

“Captain Pearson, you have fought like a hero. And I have no doubt that your sovereign will reward you for it in the most ample manner.”\*

\* *Life of Paul Jones*, by Alexander Slidell Mackenzie, Vol. i, p. 106.

## CHAPTER XII.

### *The Difficulties of Diplomacy.*

**Courteous Reception in Paris.—Compliment of the King.—Principles of Prize Division.—Embarrassing Questions.—Interesting Correspondence.—The Final Settlement.—Modest Claims of Commodore Jones.—Plan for a Commercial Speculation.—Its Failure.—The Mission to Denmark.—Return to America.**

COMMODORE JONES, upon his arrival in Paris, was invited to dine with Marshal Castries, Minister of Marine. After dinner the marshal took the commodore aside, and said to him:

“I am requested by his majesty the king to say to you that it will afford him much satisfaction to be able, in any way, to promote your future fortune.”

The commodore immediately entered, with all his energies, upon the arduous duties of his mission. There is no diplomacy equal that of a straight-forward, honest purpose. There was never a shrewd manœuvrer who did not eventually manœuvre himself out of all influence. The reader would be weary of the detail of all the embarrassments which, though the labors of two years, Commodore Jones

encountered, and over which, one by one, he triumphed. And his success was never owing to cunning or intrigue, but to the frank and manly pursuit of that which was just.

A careful examination of the diplomatic correspondence, which was long-continued and with great ability on both sides, shows that he was ever courteous, and that he held his own spirit under such control, that rarely could any annoyance provoke him to utter an irritable or a hasty word.

On the 20th of December Paul Jones was introduced to the king. He presented his credentials, and was received with the cordiality of established friendship. The following letter to the Minister of Marine will show the style and literary ability with which he conducted the correspondence. It was addressed to "My Lord Maréchal," under date of February 1st, 1784.

"As I wish to give your excellency as little trouble as may be, respecting the money arising from prizes taken by the squadron I had the honor to command in Europe, I have waited, since the day you did me the honor to present me to his majesty, until this moment, in order to give you sufficient time for any arrangement you might find essential, before the division should take place between the ships and vessels that composed the

force under my command when the prizes were taken.

“I now do myself the honor to transmit you the enclosed official letter on that subject, from Mr. Franklin, Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States, containing a copy of my credentials as agent from Congress, of which I had occasion to offer an account upon my arrival. I also enclose a statement of the force, in guns and men, of each ship and vessel that composed the squadron I commanded, which is the only paper essential to the first division of the prize-money.

“It is the custom, in cases like the present, to multiply the number of the crew by the sum of the calibre of the cannon mounted on board each ship. The product gives the intrinsic force in proportion to which the share of the prize-money arising to each ship is determined. On that ground it is my duty to claim the proportion arising to the *Bon Homme Richard* and the *Alliance*. Their proportions will afterward be divided by the American Superintendent of Finance, agreeably to the rules of the American navy, between the officers and the crews of the two ships.

“The subdivision of the shares of the other ships and vessels, in proportion to their force in men and metal, of the prizes in which they are concerned,



will remain with your excellency to determine, as may be most agreeable to the respective officers and men. As those ships and vessels were entirely his majesty's property, and their officers and men composed of French subjects, I do not presume to interfere in their respect any further than to pray your excellency, in the most earnest manner, to render them, and all concerned, that immediate justice to which all Europe knows their distinguished services so highly entitle them. As nearly four years and a half have already elapsed since those captures were made, I rely on the kind promise you gave me, that the prize-money shall now be immediately settled.

"I am, with profound respect, my lord maréchal, your most obedient and most humble servant,

"JOHN PAUL JONES."

The prize ships had been sold in France, and the money had been placed in the hand of Monsieur de Chaumont, one of the crown officers of finance. But the treasury was in debt to him. He therefore took the liberty of keeping the money in payment of that debt, leaving it for the claimants to draw upon the empty treasury for whatever sum might be due them. In reference to this aspect of affairs Commodore Jones wrote to the minister.

"Whether Monsieur de Chaumont is indebted to

the government, or the government is, as he says indebted to him, is a matter which does not concern the captors of the prizes. But they have a right to claim the protection of government to force Monsieur de Chaumont to render the money, with interest, which he has unjustly detained from them, for four years and a half, while many of them are perishing with cold and hunger."

This point he successfully carried. He had very wisely arranged with Congress that all the money he might recover should be transmitted by him to the Congressional treasury, to be paid by the minister to the individual claimants. According to the concordat or agreement which was entered upon with the French government when the little squadron sailed, it was settled :

"That the division of prizes should be made agreeably to the American laws ; but that the proportion of the whole, coming to each vessel in the squadron, should be regulated by the minister of the Marine Department of France and the minister plenipotentiary of the United States of America. '

But here there were conflicting principles. By the laws of France a certain proportion of all prize-money was set apart for the support of the Hospital of Invalids, from which institution American sailors could derive no benefit. The American prize laws

gave captors the whole value of ships of war, and half the value of merchantmen. After long negotiation the French government yielded this point also, and allowed the distribution to be made according to American law.

There were, it will be remembered, five hundred British prisoners, captured by Jones, maintained at very considerable expense for some time by the French government, at the Texel. The British government refused to surrender, in exchange for these men, *American* prisoners. They did, however, give up *French* prisoners, in exchange for them. When Commodore Jones passed over these men to the French authorities, it was with the distinct understanding that they, in conference with the British government, should obtain for them an equal number of American captives, to be delivered to Commodore Jones. But the spirit of the British cabinet was so implacable toward the Americans, that the French government could not accomplish this.

Marshal Castries now contended that the expenses attending the maintenance of these prisoners at the Texel, and their transportation to England, should be deducted from the prize-money. With justifiable intensity of purpose, Commodore Jones combated this claim. Dr. Franklin, then in Paris, was in entire accord with Commodore Jones upon

this question, as upon all the other principles Jones had insisted upon in the adjustment. On the 25th of March he wrote, in a letter addressed to "Honorable Paul Jones, Esq.":

"I certainly should not have agreed to charge the American captors with any part of the expense of maintaining the five hundred prisoners in Holland till they could be exchanged, when none of them were exchanged for the Americans in England, as was your intention, and as we both had been made to expect."

The commodore immediately enclosed this letter in another, which he addressed to Marshal de Castries. He wrote:

"The within copy of a letter which I had the honor to receive yesterday from Mr. Franklin, will convince you that he never consented, and could not consent, to the manner proposed by your predecessor and by M. de Chaumont for settlement of the prize-money due to the American officers and men who served under my orders in Europe.

"I will not complain that the prisoners which I took and carried to Holland were not exchanged for the Americans, who had been taken in war upon the ocean, and were long confined in the English dungeons by civil magistrates, as *traitors, pirates* and

*felons.* I will only say *I had such a promise from the minister of marine.*

“It was all the reward I asked for the anxious days and sleepless nights I passed, and the many dangers I encountered in glad hope of giving them all their liberty. And if I had not been assured that Mr. Franklin had made an infallible arrangement with the courts of France and England, for their immediate redemption, nothing but a superior force should have arrested them out of my hands, till they had been actually exchanged for the unhappy Americans in England.”

This claim the French government also yielded. But still the weary months rolled on, and no payment was made. The simple fact was that there was no money in the treasury. The government was in a condition of a man, struggling and floundering amidst all the intolerable embarrassments of approaching bankruptcy. There were claims upon them vastly more pressing than the payment of a few thousand livres to a few hundred poor foreign seamen. Commodore Jones was fully aware of all this. With characteristic courtesy, kindness, and yet firmness, he addressed a letter, as follows, to the marshal on the 23d of June, 1785.

“By the letter your excellency did me the honor to write me on the 13th of May last, you were

pleased to promise that as soon as M. de Chardon should have sent you the liquidation of my prizes, *which you expected without delay*, you would take measures for the payment, and you would let me know.

“ From the great number of affairs more important that engage your attention, I presume this little matter, which concerns me in a small degree personally, but chiefly as the agent of the brave men who served under my orders in Europe, may have escaped your memory. Since the first of November, 1783, when I received authority to settle this business with your excellency, I have been waiting here for no other purpose, and constantly expecting it to be concluded from month to month. To say nothing of my expenses during so long an interval, the uncertainty of my situation has been of infinite prejudice to my other concerns. My long silence is a proof that nothing but necessity could have prevailed on me to take the liberty of reminding your excellency of your promise. I hope for the honor of a final determination, and I am with great respect, etc.”

Still there were delays of the most annoying character too numerous and too tedious to be narrated. Through all these, Commodore Jones retained his equanimity, and commanded the respect of those with whom he was contending.

The expenses of Commodore Jones, as agent of the United States at the court of Versailles, were necessarily considerable. One could not fill the post of an ambassador there upon the wages of a day-laborer. It was essential to his influence, as he was daily brought in contact with the ancient nobility of France, that he should maintain the style of a gentleman.

At length, on the 15th of July, 1785, Marshal Castries issued an order to pay to Commodore Jones, at L'Orient the sum of one hundred eighty-one thousand and thirty-nine livres, one sous, and ten deniers. Thomas Jefferson was then our minister at Paris. In a letter addressed to him about this time, Jones wrote :

“I cannot bring myself to lessen the dividend of the American captors by making any charge either for my time or trouble. I lament that it has not been in my power to procure for them advantages as solid and extensive as the merit of their services. I would not have undertaken this business from any views of private emolument that could possibly have resulted from it to myself, even supposing I had recovered a sum more considerable than the penalty of my bond. The war being over I made it my first care to show the brave instruments of my success that their rights are as dear to me as

my own. It will, I believe, be proper for me to make oath before you, to the amount charged for my ordinary expenses."

Our minister received a salary of ten thousand dollars a year. It required the most rigid economy, with that sum, to meet expenses. Mrs. Adams, the wife of our distinguished ambassador John Adams, in her letters, gives a graphic account of their residence at the little village of Auteuil, about four miles from Paris. The house was large, and coldly elegant. There were massive mirrors and waxed floors, but no air of comfort. A servant polished the floors each morning with a brush buckled to one of his feet. The expenses of housekeeping were enormous. A heavy tax was imposed upon everything. All articles of domestic use about thirty per cent. higher than in Boston. It was absolutely necessary to keep a coach. The coachman and horses cost fifteen guineas a month. The social customs of the country required seven servants. The inevitable expenses of the family were so heavy that it required all Mrs. Adams's remarkable financial skill to save them from pecuniary ruin. The humble style in which they lived, compared with the splendor with which the other foreign ministers were surrounded, often caused mortification. Mr



**Jay** was compelled to resign, since he could not support himself upon his salary.

Such were the surroundings of Commodore Jones in his arduous mission. And yet he practised such rigid economy, that he charged but five thousand dollars a year for all his services and expenses. Franklin and Jefferson both carefully examined his accounts and gave them their approval. They were then sent to Congress, where they were again subjected to a rigid scrutiny, and were again approved. Not long after, on the 16th of October, 1787, Congress passed the following vote :

“Resolved unanimously, that a medal of gold be struck and presented to the Chevalier John Paul Jones, in commemoration of the valor and brilliant services of that officer, in the command of the squadron of American and French ships, under the flag and commission of the United States, off the coast of Great Britain, in the late war; and that the Honorable Mr. Jefferson, minister plenipotentiary of the United States at the court of Versailles, have the same executed with the proper devices.”

At the same time, Congress commended Commodore Jones to the special regard of the king of France, and solicited permission for him to embark in the French fleets of evolution, convinced that he can nowhere else so well acquire that knowledge

which may hereafter render him more extensively useful."

The commodore, with his intense views of life's duties, never found time for conviviality or any dissipating pleasures. He employed his otherwise unoccupied hours in writing a very carefully prepared narrative of his past services. This was not printed, but was read in manuscript by many distinguished personages. The illustrious Malesherbes, after reading the journal, wrote as follows to Mr. Jones:

"I have received with much gratitude the mark of confidence which you have given me; and I have read, with great eagerness and pleasure, the interesting relation. My first impression was to desire you to have it published. But after having read it, I perceive that you had not written it with a view to publication, because there are things in it which are written to the king, for whom alone that work was intended. However actions, memorable as yours are, ought to be made known to the world, by an authentic journal published in your own name. I earnestly entreat you to work at it as soon as your affairs will allow. In the meantime, I hope that the king will read this work with that attention which he owes to the relation of the services which had been rendered to him by a person so celebrated."

While these scenes were transpiring, the re-

known American traveller, John Ledyard, was in Paris. He proposed to Commodore Jones a commercial speculation, upon a scale of grandeur likely to interest his mind, and which would call into requisition all his administrative energies and acquired information and skill.

The plan was to fit out a vessel of two hundred and fifty tons, to be thoroughly armed and equipped, with forty-five officers and men, to be selected in France. She was to sail, on the first day of October, for Cape Horn, and thence to the Sandwich Islands. There she was to take in new stores of provisions, and continue her route to the northwest coast of North America. She was to remain from April to October, running up and down the coast, purchasing furs of the Indians.

Having filled the vessel, they were to make sail across the Pacific, for China or Japan. The rich furs would there bring a great price. They were to be sold for gold or other commodities. With this gold and merchandise the ship was to return to France, by way of the Cape of Good Hope. It was thought that the whole voyage would occupy about eighteen months. After a very close calculation it was estimated that the profits of the enterprise would amount to a little over one hundred and eighty thousand dollars.

Such was the plan in general, subject to various modifications, such as whether one vessel should go alone, or whether two should go in company. It was by a somewhat similar commercial enterprise that John Jacob Astor subsequently laid the foundation of his colossal fortune.

There was much to recommend this plan to enthusiastic and enterprising men. Its novelty lent a great charm. It was considered that the risks were small, decidedly less than those which usually attended voyages to the East or West Indies. The expense of the armament, and the cargo of trinkets, small ware, and cutlery, for traffic with the Indians, was very inconsiderable. It was well known that the northwest coast of America abounded in the richest furs, above all other regions in the world. These furs could be purchased for a mere trifle from the Indians. In China and Japan they would command extravagant prices.

Jefferson was deeply interested in this plan. In his mind, as in that of Paul Jones, it assumed a dignity far above that of a mere money-making enterprise. It would extend our knowledge of those vast regions, with their wild inhabitants, which both of these sagacious men foresaw would eventually be included within the limits of the American Union. Paul Jones was to have the supreme command, and

by his powerful influence was to obtain the vessel and the outfit. Ledyard was to be supercargo.

As they pondered the plan, aided by the cool judgment of Mr. Jefferson, it assumed ever-increasing proportions. A trading post was to be established, strongly stockaded and well garrisoned. The Indians were to be treated with the greatest justice and humanity, so as to secure their good-will. There were to be two vessels employed, one of which should always be on the coast. Silks and teas were to be purchased, upon which there would be an additional profit in Europe.

The plan was manifestly so feasible and so full of promise, that it was necessary to keep it as secret as possible, lest many others should embark in the same enterprise, and the rivalry should become great. Indeed, there were rumors, which reached Mr. Jones's ears, that there were other parties contemplating a similar movement. He wrote to Dr. Bancroft upon the subject. He replied, under date of September 9th, 1785 :

"I endeavored, as early as possible, to gain information respecting the object of your inquiry. But it was a difficult matter, none of my acquaintance knowing anything more of it than what had appeared in the public papers. Yesterday, however, I was informed, by a gentleman who I believe has some

more knowledge of the fact, that the two vessels, King George and Queen Charlotte, have actually sailed on the expedition which was thought of by Mr. Ledyard, for furs, which I should suppose must interfere with, and very much lessen the profits of any similar undertaking by others."

Mr. Jones wrote to Madrid, and was informed that the court of Spain would not allow any commercial speculation in the neighborhood of California, by the subjects of any other nation than her own. It is supposed that this fact mainly led to the abandonment of the scheme. There may have been, and probably were, other considerations. But we hear of the enterprise no more.

The reader will remember that there were three prizes sent by Landais to Norway, and that the Danish government restored them to the British ambassador upon the ground that the vessels had been captured by a people not recognized by them as an independent government. This was sustaining the British claim, that Jones was not a legitimate naval officer, but a mere pirate, whom they would be justified in hanging could they catch him. Every officer in the colonial army and navy, in the view of the British government, stood upon the same platform.

The prizes thus lost to us at Copenhagen were

valued at two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. This was five-fold the amount recovered from the prizes sent into France. Upon the threatened surrender of these prizes, Dr. Franklin immediately sent a memorial to Count Bernstorff, the Danish prime minister. This admirable state paper contained the following very characteristic sentences. After recapitulating the circumstances of the case, he adds :

“ Permit me, sir, to observe on this occasion, that the United States of America have no war but with the English. They have never done any injury to other nations, particularly none to the Danish nation. On the contrary, they are in some degree its benefactors, as they have opened a trade of which the English made a monopoly, and of which the Danes may now have their share ; and by dividing the British empire have made it less dangerous to its neighbors. They conceived that every nation whom they had not offended was, by the rights of humanity, their friend. They confided in the hospitality of Denmark, and thought themselves and their property safe when under the roof of his Danish majesty.

“ But they find themselves stripped of that property, and the same given up to their enemies, on the principle only that no acknowledgment had yet been formally made, by Denmark, of the independence of the United States ; which is to say that

there is no obligation of justice toward any nation, with whom a treaty, promising the same, has not been made. This was indeed the doctrine of ancient barbarians; a doctrine long since exploded, and which it would not be for the honor of the present age to revive. And it is hoped that Denmark will not, by supporting and persisting in this decision, obtained of his majesty apparently by surprise, be the first modern nation that shall attempt to revive it.

“The United States, oppressed by, and in war with one of the most powerful nations of Europe, may well be supposed incapable, in their present infant state, of exacting justice from other nations not disposed to grant it. But it is in human nature, that injuries as well as benefits, received in times of weakness and distress, national as well as personal, make deep and lasting impressions. And those ministers are wise who look into futurity, and quench the first sparks of misunderstanding between two nations, which neglected, may in time grow into a flame, all the consequences whereof no human prudence can foresee, which may produce much mischief to both, and cannot possibly produce any good to either.

“I beg, through your excellency, to submit these considerations to the wisdom and justice of



his Danish majesty, whom I infinitely respect, and who, I hope, will consider and repeal the order above recited ; and, if the prizes which I hereby reclaim, in behalf of the United States of America, are not actually gone to England, that they may be stopped and redelivered to M. de Chezaulx, the consul of France, at Bergen, in whose care they were before, with liberty to depart for America, when the season shall permit. But if they shall be already gone to England, I must then reclaim from his majesty's equity the value of the said three prizes, which is estimated at fifty thousand pounds sterling, but which may be regulated by the best information that can, by any means, be obtained."

The three prizes thus surrendered, were the *Betsey*, the *Union*, and the *Charming Polly*. Mr. Jones had been so successful in his negotiations with France, that it was deemed expedient to send him to Copenhagen to seek redress from the Danish court. He obtained the works of Grotius, and all other eminent writers upon the Law of Nations, and, aided by Thomas Jefferson, made himself familiar with all the principles involved in the questions at issue. Thus thoroughly equipped, he entered upon this new and difficult enterprise. In every movement of importance, at this time, Paul Jones conferred with his highly valued friends, Thomas Jefferson

and Benjamin Franklin, and acted with their concurrence. A little before this, the Danish government had so far recognized the injustice of its acts, and the validity of our claim, as to offer to pay an indemnity of forty thousand dollars. Dr. Franklin declined this offer upon the ground that the fair value of the prizes should be first ascertained. It was thought best that Commodore Jones should repair, at once, to Copenhagen.

He left Paris, with this purpose, in the spring of 1787. At Brussels he failed to receive an expected remittance from the sale of some bank stock he had ordered in America. Thus he found himself out of funds. This induced him to turn back, and take passage to the United States, to inquire into the condition of his pecuniary affairs. He speedily attended to his private concerns and prepared to return to Europe. Fully aware of the difficulty of his mission, he was anxious to fortify himself with all those moral forces which could add to his influence. He wrote to Honorable John Jay, our Minister of Foreign Affairs, soliciting from him such testimonials as would commend him to the Danish court. His letter was dated New York, July 18th, 1787. It was easy for his enemies to represent this as an act of mere vanity. Perhaps it was. But it was certainly an act of wisdom, thus to endeavor to secure

the confidence and good-will of the court, to which he was commissioned for the performance of duties so arduous. In the conclusion of his letter to Mr. Jay, he wrote :

“Since the year 1775, when I displayed the American flag, for the first time, with my own hands, I have been constantly devoted to the interests of America. Foreigners have perhaps given me too much credit. This may have raised my ideas of my services above their real value. But my zeal can never be overrated.

“I should act inconsistently, if I omitted to mention the dreadful situation of our citizens in Algiers. Their almost hopeless fate is a deep reflection on our national character in Europe. I beg leave to influence the humanity of Congress in their behalf, and to propose that some expedient may be adopted for their redemption. A fund might be raised, for that purpose, by a duty of a shilling per month from seamen’s wages, throughout the continent, and I am persuaded that no difficulty would be made to that requisition.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### *The Mission to Denmark.*

Letter to Mr. Jefferson.—The Marquise de Marsan.—Unfounded Charges and Vindication.—Flattering Application from Catherine II.—His Reception at the Polish Court.—Jones receives the Title of Rear-Admiral.—English Insolence.—Letter of Catherine II.

JUST before Mr. Jones left Europe, he transmitted a letter to Congress, informing them that the piratic regency of Algiers had armed eight war vessels, carrying from eighteen to thirty-four guns each, which were to cruise between Cape St. Vincent and the Azores, to capture American ships. The French minister, M. Soulanges, at Toulon, had ascertained this fact, and very kindly, immediately communicated it to Mr. Jones. In writing to Mr. Jefferson upon the subject, the commodore said :

“ This event may, I believe, surprise some of our fellow-citizens. But, for my part, I am rather surprised that it did not take place sooner. It will produce a good effect, if it unites the people of America in measures consistent with their national honor and interest, and rouses them from that ill-judged secu

city, which the intoxication of success has produced since the revolution."

One of his most valued lady friends in France, a daughter of Louis XV., wrote to him, in deepest affliction. Though a daughter of the king, and as such enjoying high rank, she was not regarded as a member of the royal family. The king bestowed a large fortune upon the mother, on the daughter's account. The father died when the daughter, who was a great favorite of his, was very young. The mother then greatly neglected this child of a royal sire, treating her neither with natural affection nor justice. This young lady was adopted by the Marquise de Marsan, who became to her as a mother, and introduced her to the highest society of the court.

She was very happily married to M. Tellison, a very worthy gentleman, but without fortune. In this virtuous family, Commodore Jones had found, in his lonely hours in Paris, a congenial and happy home. The aged marquise regarded the young hero as her own son. Monsieur and Madame Tellison treated him with truly fraternal affection. Their little boy was a great favorite of the commodore, as he fondled him upon his knee, and lavished caresses upon him.

Man is born to mourn. The day of sorrow came to this united and happy family. On the 23d of

June, 1787, Madame Tellison wrote to Paul Jones, in New York, informing him of the sudden death of her friend and protectress, the Marquise de Marsan, and of consequently a great reverse in their pecuniary condition. Jones, writing to Dr. Bancroft in London, alluding to this event, said :

“ This is also a great grief and loss to me, as I had in that lady a valuable friend.”

The letter Madame Tellison had written to Mr. Jones, was forwarded to him by Thomas Jefferson. He immediately wrote to Mr. Jefferson as follows :

“ The letter you sent me, left the feeling author all in tears. Her friend, her protectress, her introductress to the king, was suddenly dead. She was in despair. She lost more than a mother. A loss indeed that nothing can repair ; for fortune and favor are never to be compared to tried friendship. I hope, however, she has gone to visit the king in July, agreeably to his appointment given to her in the month of March. I am persuaded that he would receive her with additional kindness, and that her loss would, in his mind, be a new claim to protection ; especially as he well knows and has acknowledged her superior merit and just pretensions.

“ As I feel the greatest concern for the situation of this worthy lady, you will render me a great favor by writing a note requesting her to call on you,

as you have something to communicate from me. When she comes, be so good as to deliver her the within letter, and show her this; that she may see both my confidence in you and my advice to her."

The enclosed letter, full of gushing sympathies, was as follows. It was dated New York, September 4th, 1787.

"No language can convey to the fair mourner the tender sorrow I feel on her account. The loss of our worthy friend is, indeed, a fatal stroke! It is an irreparable misfortune, which can only be alleviated by this one reflection, that it is the will of God, whose providence has, I hope, other blessings in store for us. She was a tried friend and more than a mother to you. She would have been a mother to me also, had she lived. We have lost her. Let us cherish her memory and send up grateful thanks to the Almighty that we once had such a friend.

"I cannot but flatter myself that you have yourself gone to the king, in July, as he had appointed. I am sure your loss will be a new inducement for him to protect you and render you justice. He will hear you, I am sure. You may safely unbosom yourself to him and ask his advice, which cannot but be flattering for him to give you. Tell him you must look on him as your father and protector. If

it were necessary I think too that the Count d'Artois,\* his brother, would, on your personal application, render you good offices by speaking in your favor. I should like it better, however, if you can do without him.

"I am almost without money, and much puzzled to obtain a supply. I mention this with infinite regret, and for no other reason than because it is impossible for me to transmit you a supply, under my present circumstances. This is my fifth letter to you since I left Paris. The two last were from France. But you say nothing of having received any letters from me. Summon, my dear friend, all your resolution. Exert yourself and plead your own cause. You cannot fail of success. Your cause would move a heart of flint. Present my best respects to your sister. You did not mention her in your letter. But I persuade myself she will continue her tender care of her sweet godson, and that you will cover him all over with kisses from me. They come warm to you both, from the heart.'

While in New York he heard very ungenerous complaints that his charge for services in recovering the prize-money was exorbitant. Earnestly seeking the good-will of his fellow-citizens, these reproaches pained him. He wrote upon the subject as follows:

\* Subsequently Charles X



“The settlement I made, with the court of France, had first Dr. Franklin’s, and afterwards Mr. Jefferson’s approbation, in every stage and article of the business. And I presume it will be found, so far as depended on me, to merit that of the United States. In France I was received and treated by the king and his ministers, as a general officer, and a special minister from Congress. The credit with which I was honored as an officer, in the opinion of Europe, and the personal intimacy I have with many great characters at Paris, with my exclusive knowledge of all circumstances relative to the business, insured me a success which no other man could have obtained. My situation subjected me to considerable expense. I went to court much oftener, and mixed with the great much more frequently than our minister plenipotentiary. Yet the gentlemen in that situation consider their salary of two thousand pounds sterling a year as scarcely adequate to their expenses.”

His busy mind was ever fertile in expedients for the public welfare. In urging upon Congress immediate and effectual measures for the rescue of the unhappy American captives in piratic and barbaric Algiers, he had urged the establishment of a fund for that object. He also urged that, from this fund, a great national hospital should be established, for the

benefit of invalid seamen, on the plan of the renowned Greenwich Hospital in England, and the still more far-famed Hotel des Invalides in Paris.

On the 11th of November, Mr. Jones sailed from New York on his mission to Denmark. Unfavorable weather caused the ship to put into Dover early in December, 1787. He repaired to London and spent a few days with our minister at the court of St. James, Honorable John Adams. He proceeded to Paris, where he arrived on the 11th of the month. For some unexplained reason he did not wish to have the fact of his arrival noised abroad. The day after he reached Paris, he had a private interview with Mr. Jefferson. In this interview he received the startling and flattering announcement, that the Empress of Russia was anxious to engage his services as an officer, in the war she was then carrying on against the Turks. M. Simolin, the Russian ambassador at Versailles, had been instructed to apply to Mr. Jones, through Mr. Jefferson, to see if the services of the chevalier could be engaged as an officer in her navy. While this plan was under consideration, he called upon several of the French ministers, from whom he met a very cordial reception.

On the 4th of March, 1788, after a long and fatiguing winter journey, Mr. Jones reached Copenhagen. He was then but forty years of age. His

health, however, was much impaired by the cares, toil, and exposure of his stormy life. Soon after his arrival he breakfasted with the chamberlain of the king of Poland, for the purpose of meeting Mr. Simolin, the Russian ambassador. He informed Mr. Jones, that in consequence of the knowledge which the empress had obtained of his character, she wished him to take command of her fleet in the Black Sea, and that she would soon make to him advantageous proposals. After the Russian ambassador had retired, the chamberlain, whose guest the commodore was, informed him that Mr. Simolin had written to the empress :

“ If your Imperial Majesty will confide to Commodore Jones the chief command on the Black Sea, with *carte blanche*, I will answer for it, that, in less than a year he will make Constantinople tremble.”

Soon after this he was presented to the royal family, to all of the corps diplomatique, and to many other distinguished personages *of the court*. In speaking of his reception by the king, the queen dowager, and the young prince and princess royal, he wrote :

“ The queen dowager conversed with me for some time, and said the most civil things. Her majesty has a dignity of person and deportment which become her well, and which she has the secret

to reconcile with great affability and ease. The princess royal is a charming person ; and the graces are so much her own, that it is impossible to see and converse with her without paying her the homage which artless beauty and good-nature will ever command. All the royal family spoke to me except the king, who speaks to no person when presented. His majesty saluted me with great complaisance at first, and as often afterwards as we met in the course of the evening. The prince royal is greatly beloved, and extremely affable. He asked me a number of pertinent questions respecting America. I had the honor to be invited to sup with his majesty and the royal family, The company at table, consisting of seventy ladies and gentlemen, including the royal family, the ministers of state, and foreign ambassadors, was very brilliant.

Very earnestly Commodore Jones engaged in the object of his mission. He had a double motive to impel him to make all possible haste. In addition to the natural desire to close up the business, which had been thus lingering for years, he was now daily expecting offers of employment from the Empress of Russia, which it might be greatly for his interest to accept. The Algerines, those merciless pirates of all seas, were united with the Turks of Constantinople, in their warfare against Russia. An

opportunity might thus be afforded him to strike a blow for the liberation of the American captives. This was an object very near his heart.

There is power in an illustrious name. The achievements of Commodore Jones were well known at Copenhagen. He had received a golden medal, for his services, from the Congress of the United States. The king of France had honored him with a gold-headed sword, and had conferred upon him the distinguished honor of constituting him a Knight of the Order of Military Merit. It was also known that he had won the esteem of the most distinguished men in Paris, and was an honored guest in the highest circles of the court. These considerations were all elements of power, of which Mr. Jones very wisely availed himself. In urging the Danish minister, Count de Bernstorff, to a prompt decision, Mr. Jones wrote under date of March 24th :

“ The promise you have given me of a prompt and explicit decision, from this court, inspires me with full confidence. I have been very particular in communicating to the United States all the polite attentions with which I have been honored at this court. And they will learn, with great pleasure, the kind reception I have had from you. I felicitated myself on being the instrument to settle the delicate national business in question, with a minister who

conciliates the views of the wise statesman with the noblest sentiments and cultivated mind of the true philosopher and man of letters."

If any one regards this as excessive in its complimentary tone, as it certainly appears to be, let him read the next letter to Count Bernstorff, after a delay of six days, which indicates that he could deal with other coin besides that of laudation. This letter was dated March 30th.

"Your silence on the subject of my mission from the United States to this court, leaves me in the most painful suspense ; the more so as I have made your excellency acquainted with the promise I am under, to proceed, as soon as possible, to St. Petersburg. This being the ninth year since the three prizes reclaimed by the United States, were seized upon in the port of Bergen, in Norway, it is to be presumed that this court has long since taken an ultimate resolution respecting the compensation demand made by Congress.

"Though I am extremely sensible of the favorable reception with which I have been distinguished at this court, and am particularly flattered by the polite attentions with which you have honored me, at every conference, yet I have remarked with great concern, that you have never led the conversation to the object of my mission here.

“ A man of your liberal sentiments will not therefore be surprised, or offended at my plain dealing when I repeat that I impatiently expect a prompt and categorical answer, in writing, from this court to the Act of Congress of the 25th of October last. Both my duty, and the circumstances of my situation, coustrain me to make this demand in the name of my sovereign the United States of America.

“ But I beseech you to believe that though I am extremely tenacious of the honor of the American flag, yet my personal interests in the decision I now ask, would never have induced me to present myself at this court. You are too just, sir, to delay my business here, which would put me under the necessity to break the promise I have made to her imperial majesty, conformable to your advice.”

To this very decisive communication the minister returned an answer full of compliments and full of evasions. The king had no money to spare. Yet he was very desirous of securing the friendship of the United States, that he might enter into a commercial treaty, which would be of great benefit to Denmark. Amidst a vast mass of verbiage the commodore was informed that the king thought it best to defer a final settlement until the Constitution of the United States was fully established; that a settlement could only be made with an ambassador invested

with plenipotentiary powers ; and that, as the negotiations were commenced with the United States ministers in Paris, it was not expedient to transfer the seat of the suspended negotiation from Paris to Copenhagen. In conclusion, he begged Commodore Jones to assure the government of the United States of the cordial esteem of the king of Denmark, of the earnest desire of his majesty to form connexions solid, useful and essential with this country, and to assure the government that when the proper time came, nothing should be allowed to retard the conclusion of an amicable settlement of a question, already so far advanced toward a solution. Under these circumstances, the only thing to be done was to transfer the business to Mr. Jefferson. This enabled him immediately to enter upon the service of the Empress of Russia. In his letter, on this occasion, to Mr. Jefferson, he wrote :

“ If I have not finally concluded the object of my mission it is neither your fault nor mine. The honor is now reserved for you to display your great abilities and integrity by the completion and improvement of what Dr. Franklin had wisely begun. I rest perfectly satisfied that the interests of the brave men I commanded will experience in you, parental affection, and that the American flag can lose none



of its lustre, but the contrary, while its honor is confided to you.

“While I express, in the warm effusions of a grateful heart, the deep sense I feel of my eternal obligations to you, as the author of the honorable prospect that is now before me, I must rely on your friendship to justify to the United States the important step I now take conformable to your advice.

“I have not forsaken a country that has had many and disinterested proofs of my affection. And I can never renounce the glorious title of a citizen of the United States. It is true that I have not the express permission of the sovereignty to accept the offer of her imperial majesty. Yet America is independent, is in perfect peace, and has no public employment for my military talents.

“The prince royal sent me a messenger requesting me to come to his apartment. His royal highness said a great many civil things to me; told me that the king thanked me for my attention and civil behavior to the Danish flag, while I commanded in the European seas; and that his majesty wished to testify to me his personal esteem.”

It is said that Jones was offered a pension from the Danish government of fifteen hundred crowns a year. Jones, however, never mentioned this circum-

stance to any of his most familiar correspondents. There is no evidence that he ever received one dollar of this money, but, on the contrary, much evidence that he never received any.

The commodore repaired to St. Petersburg. He was received by the empress with more flattering attentions than the court had ever before conferred upon any stranger. The empress immediately conferred upon him the rank of rear-admiral. He was detained in the capital, contrary to his wishes, a fortnight, where he was introduced to the first circles of society, feasted and caressed. Jones, speaking of this reception, writes to Lafayette :

“You would be charmed with Prince Potemkin. He is a most amiable man, and none can be more noble-minded. For the empress, fame has never done her justice. I am sure that no stranger who has not known that illustrious character, ever conceived how much her majesty is made to reign over a great empire, and to attach grateful and susceptible minds.”

The attentions which Paul Jones received from the Russian court greatly annoyed the English in and about St. Petersburg. They still insolently persisted in stigmatizing a commissioned officer in the American navy as a *renegade* and a *pirate*, because,

having been born in Scotland, he had espoused the cause of American liberty.

Tooke, in his life of Catherine II., gives vent to all his bitter British prejudices. Calling Admiral Jones an "English pirate and renegado," he adds, "Jones, not meeting with the consideration he expected in America, made a tender of his services to the court of St. Petersburg; and the British officers, applicants for employment, went in a body to the amount of near thirty to lay down their commissions, declaring it was impossible to serve under him, or to act with him in any measure or capacity.

We read in an Edinburgh paper of that date the following notice of that event, probably written by a *Russian* officer. "Paul Jones arrived here a few days ago. He is to set out soon, to take command of a squadron in the Black Sea. I had the satisfaction to see this honest man, while he was examining one of our dock-yards. He is a well-made man of middle size; he wears the French uniform with the Cross of St. Louis, and a Danish order which he received at Copenhagen, where he had the honor to dine with the king. He has also received, since he came here, one of the first Orders of Merit in this country so that it is to be feared that they will spoil him by making too much of him The English

officers in the service have presented a **memorial to Admiral Greig**, refusing to serve with Jones, and threatening to throw **up** their commissions. Whether they will stand to their text, it is difficult to say."

The empress paid no attention whatever to this petulance. Admiral Jones treated it with profound contempt. In writing to Lafayette, in reference to his treatment by the Russian court, he says :

" This was a cruel grief to the English, and I own that their vexation, which was generally in and about St. Petersburg, gave me no pain."

The empress with her own hands wrote to the admiral. In her letter she probably refers, though slightly, to this unmanly opposition of the English. We give her letter.

" SIR—A courier from Paris has just brought from my envoy in France, M. Simolin, the enclosed letter to Count Besborodko.\* As I believe that this letter may help to confirm to you what I have already told you verbally, I have sent it, and beg you to return it, as I have not even made a copy be taken, so anxious am I that you should see it. I hope that it will efface all doubts from your mind, and prove to you that you are to be connected only with those **who are** most favorably disposed toward you. I

\* Russian Minister for the Home Department.

have no doubt but that on your side you will fully justify the opinion which we have formed of you, and apply yourself with zeal to support the reputation and the name you have acquired for valor and skill on the element in which you are to serve.

“ Adieu. I wish you happiness and health.

“ CATHERINE.”

18°

## CHAPTER XIV.

### *The Russian Campaign.*

**Admiral Jones repairs to the Black Sea.—Designs of Catherine II — Imposing Cavalcade.—Turkey Declares War against Russia — Daring Conduct of Admiral Jones.—A Greek Officer Alexiana.— The Prince of Nassau Siegen.—Annoyances of Admiral Jones from Russian Officers.—Battle in the Black Sea.—Jones yields the Honor to the Prince of Nassau.**

AT the same time when Chevalier Jones received his flattering letter from the empress, her prime minister sent to him a despatch, requesting him to repair to the naval headquarters on the Black Sea, that he might take part in the opening of the campaign. The minister also assured him, in the name of the empress, that everything possible should be done to make his situation agreeable, and to furnish him with opportunities for the exercise of his valor and skill. It is not surprising that the admiral, receiving such marks of attention from her imperial highness, should have formed a high estimate of the excellence of her character. He wrote to Count Segur at this time, saying :

“I shall write to the empress, who hath sent me

a letter full of goodness. But I shall never be able to express how much greater I find her than fame reports. With the character of a very great man, she will be always adored as the most amiable and captivating of the fair sex.”

War had been impending for several years between Russia and Turkey. The Turks, in the wanton spirit of barbarian conquest, without the shadow of excuse for the invasion, had crossed the Hellespont with an overwhelming army, had seized Constantinople, and rushing onward in the tide of victory, had unfurled their triumphant banners within sight of the battlements of Vienna. All Europe had trembled beneath the tread of the terrible Moslem armies. Catherine was anxious to drive these usurping Turks back from Europe, across the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, into their Asiatic wilds. She would make the imperial city of Constantine her maritime capital and her great naval depot, from which most admirable point she could command the commerce of the world. This was the real and ever-constant cause for the war, which for nearly a century had been waged between Russia and the Porte. But innumerable and frivolous pretexts had been brought forward, as excuses for an appeal to arms.

About ten years before this, the empress had established a naval depot on the right bank of the

Dnieper, not very far from the entrance of the river into the Euxine, or Black Sea. Imperial influence soon brought a population of forty thousand to this port, which became an important dock-yard, where the largest ships-of-war were launched. The region around was wild, savage, filled with wandering, half-civilized Tartar tribes. Russian gold and Russian arms gradually gained the ascendancy and the tribes, with their territory, were gradually annexed to the majestic Russian Empire.

Catherine then contrived, by a treaty with the Porte, to obtain the sovereignty over the immense province of the Crimea ; also a sort of dominion over the Black Sea, and the right to pass with her ships through the Dardanelles. In anticipation of the conquest of Constantinople, she caused her young son to be called Constantine. The King of Poland, the Emperor of Austria, and most of the other powers of northern Europe, were in sympathy with the ambitious designs of Russia. They all wished to see the Turks driven back into Asia. In that case, most of them would receive portions of the immense territory which the Turks had overrun in Europe. But England was intensely opposed to the designs of Russia. The Turkish Empire, England regarded as **an important and necessary barrier between the**



rapidly growing power of Russia and her own possessions in the East Indies.

In the year 1786, Catherine projected a magnificent progress to her new possessions on the Euxine. The enterprise was organized with all the imposing brilliance which oriental grandeur could create. The immense cavalcade, numbering thousands of the plumed and gayly dressed chivalry of Europe, followed down the magnificent valley of the Dnieper. All the most prominent members of the Russian court accompanied the empress. The ambassadors of France, Austria, and of England were in her train. The latter were probably instructed, carefully to observe all the movements.

At the city of Kief, some six or seven hundred miles from the mouth of the river, Prince Potemkin joined the imperial party with a brilliant cavalcade of the princes, dukes, and counts of the minor powers of Europe. The King of Poland, with a large retinue of his nobles, commenced the journey with the empress. The Emperor of Austria, with a still more imposing escort, joined her on the way.

The Turkish government was quite troubled, in view of this remarkable visitation. Four of the largest ships of the line were sent to cast anchor at the mouth of the Dnieper ; though they were instructed not to make any hostile demonstrations.

The empress returned to St. Petersburg. Soon after this, Turkey declared war against Russia, with England for her adviser. An army of eighty thousand men was ordered to march instantly along the western shore of the Euxine, to the mouth of the Dnieper. Sixteen ships of the line, eight frigates, and a large number of gun-boats, passed through the Bosphorus into the Euxine. The Turks had drawn the sword, and thrown away the scabbard.

The news of this declaration of war by Turkey was received with great joy at St. Petersburg. It was just what the empress desired. At Cherson, Odessa, and other points at the mouth of the Dnieper, she had created quite a formidable fleet. At very short notice, she could launch on the waters of the Euxine, eight ships of the line, twelve frigates, and nearly two hundred gun-boats. Joseph II. of Austria had entered into alliance with the empress. Eighty thousand Austrian troops were sent to coöperate with the Russian arms, in Wallachia. Two Russian squadrons, under Admirals Kruse and Greig, were ready to coöperate in the Mediterranean. Such was the state of affairs between Russia and Turkey, at the time Commodore Jones accepted the invitation of the empress. He subsequently wrote a very carefully prepared journal of the difficulties he

encountered, and of the results of this all-important enterprise.

This journal, very handsomely executed, was engrossed in the French language, and was accompanied by ninety-three *Pièces Justificatives*, or documentary proofs, of the accuracy of all his important statements. The truthfulness of this narrative has never been called in question. It was not published until after his death. Justice to Admiral Jones demands that I should quote freely from this very important document. The reader will thus obtain a more correct idea of the true character of the man, and of the adventures upon which he entered, than could be gained in any other way. After describing the circumstances under which he was led to enter into the service of the empress, he writes :

“In Denmark I put in train a treaty between that power and the United States, but it was interrupted by a courier from St. Petersburg, despatched express by the empress, inviting me to repair to her court.

“Though I foresaw many difficulties in the way of my entering the Russian service, I believed I could not avoid going to St. Petersburg, to thank the empress for the favorable opinion she had conceived of me. I transferred the treaty, going forward at Copenhagen, to Paris, to be concluded there,

and set out for St. Petersburg, by Sweden. At Stockholm I staid but one night, to see Ccunt Rasoumorsky. Want of time prevented me from appearing at court.

“At Gresholm, I was stopped by the ice, which prevented me from crossing the Gulf of Bothnia, and even from approaching the first of the isles in the passage. After having made several unsuccessful efforts to get to Finland by the isles, I imagined that it might be practicable to effect my object by doubling the ice to the southward, and entering the Baltic Sea.

“This enterprise was very daring, and had never before been attempted. But by the north, the roads were impracticable ; and knowing that the empress expected me from day to day, I could not think of going back by Elsinore.

“I left Gresholm early one morning, in an undecked passage-boat about thirty feet in length. I made another boat follow of about half that size. This last was for dragging over the cakes of ice, and for passing from one to another to gain the coast of Finland. I durst not make my project known to the boatmen, which would have been the sure means of deterring them from it. After endeavoring, as before, to gain the first isle, I made them steer for the south, and we kept along the coast of Sweden

all the day, finding with difficulty room enough to pass between the ice and the shore. Toward night, being almost opposite Stockholm, pistol in hand I forced the boatmen to enter the Baltic Sea, and steer to the east."

Here it is obvious to remark, that this was outrageously unjust. These poor boatmen, with parents, wives, and children perhaps, dependent upon them, had never promised at whatever hazard, to take him across that stormy sea. Indeed he had studiously concealed from them the peril of the enterprise upon which he had embarked. If the admiral were willing, in view of the fame and fortune which were enticing him beyond those tempest-tossed ice-fields, to incur the dreadful risks, he had no right to compel these poor men to peril their lives in a cause in which they had nothing to gain. If we understand the facts, as given by the commodore himself, the course which he pursued on this occasion is entirely unjustifiable. Admiral Jones continues :

"We ran toward the coast of Finland. All night the wind was fair, and we hoped to land next day. This we found impossible. The ice did not permit us to approach the shore, which we only saw from a distance. It was impossible to regain the Swedish side, the wind being strong and directly contrary. I had no other course but to make for the Gulf of

Finland. There was a small compass in the boat, and I fixed the lamp of my travelling carriage so as to throw a light on it.

“On the second night we lost the small boat, which was sunk. But the men saved themselves in the large one, which with difficulty escaped the same fate. At the end of four days, we landed at Revel in Livonia, which was regarded as a kind of miracle. Having satisfied the boatmen for their services and their loss, I gave them a good pilot, with the provisions necessary for their homeward voyage when the weather should become more favorable.”

The admiral arrived at St. Petersburg on the evening of 23d of April, O. S. On the 25th, he had his first audience with the empress. On the 7th of May, he set out for the seat of war. The long and dreary journey across the whole breadth of Russia to the banks of the Euxine, occupied twelve days. He reached the mouth of the Dnieper on the 19th. The Prince Marshal Potemkin was there, and received him very kindly. He requested the admiral immediately to assume command of the naval force stationed near the mouth of the river. He remained at Cherson but one evening and night, but that short time showed him that he would have very serious obstacles to encounter.

The Russian rear-admiral, Mordwinoff, did not

affect to disguise his displeasure at his arrival. He gave the new admiral a very sullen reception, delayed communicating to him the details of the force under his command, and manifested no disposition to place him in possession of the silk flag, which belonged to his rank as rear-admiral. The River Bog empties into the Dnieper near the point where that majestic stream pours its flood into the Black Sea. Here the waters expand into a bay, affording good anchorage ground, called the Roads of Shiroque. The Russian fleet of ships and gun-boats was assembled at this place. Early in the morning after the admiral's arrival at Cherson, he accompanied General Mordwinoff down the river to the naval rendezvous. They reached the flag-ship Wolodimir about mid-day.

One of the most prominent officers in the squadron was a Greek by the name of Alexiano. He was a fearless, coarse, unmannerly fellow, who had been, it was said, a pirate in the Archipelago, and by his piracies, plundering the commerce of all nations, had greatly enriched himself. This man had assembled all the commanders of the ships, and had endeavored to unite them in a cabal against the new admiral. In this he had not been fully successful. Still he had created antagonisms to the authority of Admiral Jones which caused him great embarrass-

ment. Alexiano had obtained the grade of captain with the title of brigadier.

The Turkish fleet and flotilla were a few miles below the roads of Shiroque, nearly opposite Ocza-kow, which was held by a strong garrison of the Turks, and was besieged on the land side by the Russians, the Turkish fleet holding the harbor. Admiral Jones, very wisely avoiding all angry contention with his opponents, proposed to one of the Russian officers who was friendly to him, that they should descend the bay together, and carefully reconnoitre the strength and position of the Turkish forces. While he was absent, Prince Potemkin, who was second in authority to the empress only, exerted all his influence to restore harmony. In this he was partially successful. The admiral, upon his return, found all the officers apparently contented; and on the 26th of May, 1788, he hoisted his flag on the Wolodimir.

The Prince of Nassau Siegen, one of the German principalities, was a very singular man. He was rattle-brained, excessively vain, and quite destitute of either ability in counsel or skill in execution. Admiral Jones had been slightly acquainted with him in Paris, and was very sorry to meet him as an associate on a military expedition. This man had a most exalted idea of his own importance, and joined



the expedition of the Russian empress, with the impression that the success of the campaign depended mainly upon him. One of his first instructive remarks to Admiral Jones was :

“ If we gain any advantage over the Turks, it is essential to exaggerate it to the utmost.”

To this statement, which was made with a very patronizing air, the admiral simply replied :

“ I have never adopted that method of making myself of consequence.”

The rank of the prince, his possessions, and his boastful braggadocio spirit had strangely deceived the empress. The fleet consisted of two pretty distinct portions ; a squadron of powerful war vessels and a large flotilla of gun-boats. The necessity of coöperative action in military expeditions is such, that Napoleon I. once remarked :

“ It is better to intrust the command of an army to one poor general than to two good ones.”

Admiral Jones found that while he was intrusted with the command of the war-ships, the flotilla of gun-boats was placed under the independent orders of the Prince of Nassau. Nothing efficient could be accomplished against the powerful and well-manned navy of the Turks without the coöperation of the whole Russian fleet of ships and boats under the direction of a single mind. And yet there probably

were not in all Europe two men less calculated to act together than Admiral Jones and the Prince of Nassau.

These two immense fleets and armies were facing each other. The headquarters of the Russians was at Cherson, while the Turks had their central rendezvous about fifty miles farther southeast, at Oczakow. The spacious waters between Cherson and Oczakow, where the Dnieper and the Bog pour their widening floods into the Euxine, were filled with the ships of the line, the frigates, and the gun-boats of the contending parties.

For four months there was almost a continuous series of manœuvres and skirmishes, rising occasionally into hotly contested battles. The region was full of shoals and sand-bars, where the heavily-armed ships, and even the gun-boats, were continually running a ground. Prince Potemkin was in the supreme command of the whole force, naval and military. He stood in the place of the empress, and was said in reality to have more power than Catherine herself. Admiral Jones found that he could originate no movement. He could only obey orders, and must wait patiently until he received them. When orders were given, the ships alone were subject to his command. The Prince of Nassau was jealous of his renown, and seemed often disposed rather to thwart

than to aid the efforts of the admiral. He was a man of considerable skill in cunning and intrigue, and had led even Potemkin to apprehend that great results were to be accomplished by the action of his gunboats.

The latter part of May, 1788, the Turkish admiral came to the succor of Oczakow, with an additional fleet of one hundred and twenty armed vessels, and other armed craft. Thus the Turkish naval force, in those waters, far surpassed that of the Russian. Admiral Jones was requested with his ships to harass the Turks, in all the ways in his power without exposing himself to loss. The Turks, conscious of their superiority, were not disposed to run any risks. Admiral Jones was also disappointed in finding that several of his ships were merely large pleasure barges, with which the empress and her court, had floated down the Dnieper. These were inefficiently armed, and were but poorly prepared for a conflict with the oak-ribbed ships of the Turks.

Admiral Jones was sorely tried. He saw but little opportunity, under such circumstances, for anything to be accomplished to the honor of the Russian flag. He however invited all the leading officers, both of the squadron and of the flotilla to his cabin, and thus addressed them :

"GENTLEMEN—Having been suddenly called to serve her imperial majesty, I have need of double indulgence, being as yet ignorant of the language and customs of the country. I confess I mistrust my capacity properly to discharge all the duties of the high trust with which her majesty has honored me. But I rely on my zeal, and your favor, coöperation, and candid advice, for the good of the service. You are met, gentlemen, on serious business. We are to discuss points which touch nearly the honor of the Russian flag and the interests of her majesty.

"We have to deal with a formidable enemy, but if we are united, and of one mind in all our efforts; if our operations are well concerted and vigorously executed, the known courage of the Russians, the cause of the empress and of the country, the remembrance of so many past victories, afford us the most flattering hope of success, and cannot fail to inspire invincible resolution. We must resolve to conquer. Let us join our hands and our hearts. Let us show that our feelings are noble, and cast far from us all personal considerations. Honor enough may be gained by every individual; but the true glory of the citizen is to be useful to his country."

This conciliatory speech of the admiral seemed to have produced a good impression. They all

agreed to combine their energies in an attack, the next day, upon an exposed portion of the Turkish fleet, in accordance with a plan presented by Admiral Jones.

In consequence of the shallowness of the water, most of the manœuvres were to be conducted by the gun-boats. The heavy ships could sweep over only a limited range, being of necessity confined to the channels of deep water. Admiral Jones, consequently, took his station on board the gun-boats, passing from one to another, as the incidents of the conflict required. A very fierce battle was fought.

Admiral Jones seems to have been born insensible to fear. Amidst the most terrific scenes of death and destruction, he moved with as unperturbed a spirit as if he were merely contending with an ordinary storm at sea. Much of the time, he was in the same gun-boat with the Prince of Nassau. The prince had the good sense to be guided by the advice of the officer who was, in every respect, so vastly his superior. The victory was decisive for the Russians. Two of the Turkish ships were burned. The Turkish flotilla of fifty-seven vessels was driven from the ground it had occupied, to seek protection under the heavy guns of the squadron. As the battle was mainly conducted by the gun-boats, the admiral left all the honor with the Prince of Nassau. Still Ad-

miral Jones formed the plan, and guided in all the tactics of the strife. And he could not prevent it from being whispered, that the honor of the victory really belonged to himself. This annoyed the Prince of Nassau.

Alluding to this fact, Admiral Jones wrote, on the 11th of June, in a letter to Mr. Littlepage, chamberlain of the King of Poland :

“ Prince Potemkin wrote me a letter of thanks for the affair of the 7th. If the honor had been ten times greater, I should have renounced it altogether, in favor of the Prince of Nassau. But I am sorry to say he is too jealous to be content with my self-denial. Perhaps he is ill-advised without knowing it. There is nothing consistent with my honor that I would not do, to make him easy. I am the more in pain, as I understand he spoke favorably of me to Prince Potemkin before I arrived. If he now becomes my enemy, I shall not imitate his example. It was my intention to pay him a compliment, when I said in my letter to the prince, ‘ that he had taken my counsel in good part, in the affair of the 7th.’ I showed the Prince of Nassua that letter, and he seemed pleased with it. In the affair, he embraced me, and said we ‘ should always make but one.’ But now I find a false construction has been put upon my

letter, and his jealousy supersedes every noble sentiment."

Ten days after this, Admiral Jones again wrote to Mr. Littlepage, in which letter he says :

"I have put up with more from the Prince of Nassau than, under other circumstances, I could have done from any man who was not crazy. I can no more reckon upon his humor than on the wind. One hour he embraces me, and the next he is ready to cut my throat."

As we have mentioned, the naval force of the Turks far exceeded that of the Russians. The Turkish admiral, whose title seems to have been "Capitaine Pasha," was a man of decided ability. Admiral Jones had been led to form a very high opinion of his character both as an officer and a gentleman. He had formed the plan to make a sudden and unexpected attack, with his whole force of ships and gun-boats, upon the Russian flotilla and squadron ; by running down the gun-boats and throwing a shower of fire-balls upon the squadron, he hoped to destroy the whole fleet.

## CHAPTER XV.

### *Adventures in the Black Sea.*

**The First Battle.—Folly of the Prince of Nassau.—Inefficiency of the Gun-boats.—Burning of the Greek Captives.—Humanity of Jones.—Alienation between the Admiral and the Prince of Nassau.—The Second Conflict.—Annoyances of the Admiral.—Hostility of the English.—Necessary Employment of Foreign Seamen.—Disgrace of Nassau.—Transference of the Admiral to the Baltic.**

It was the plan of Admiral Jones, to anticipate the contemplated attack of the Capitaine Pasha, and so to weaken him as at least to embarrass his movements. The plan he proposed was so necessary and apparently so feasible, that it was accepted by all the officers. During the night, as the wind did not favor, he warped the ships of his squadron, by means of their anchors, to the positions he wished them to occupy. The next morning, which was the 17th of June, 1788, the wind was fresh and fair. At the earliest dawn the admiral signalled for all his war ships to bear down upon the Turkish fleet, which was before him in the broad shallow bay, at the distance of but a few miles. The gun-boats,



under the command of the Prince of Nassau, followed tardily behind the squadron. Their progress was so slow, though there was no occasion whatever for the delay, that the admiral had to halt twice, in order to allow the gun-boats to come up with him.

It was a brilliant spectacle which was presented in the rays of this June morning's sun. The majestic bay, into which were poured the waters of the Dnieper, the Bog, the Liman, and several other minor streams, spread out in all directions. The whole Russian fleet of ships and gun-boats, in beautiful battle array, was bearing down under full sail with a fair wind, upon the unsuspecting and unprepared Turks. The moment the Capitaine Pas'ha caught sight of the wondrous spectacle, he was terror-stricken. The force rushing upon him appeared far more powerful than it really was. The wind being fresh and fair, the Turkish admiral saw at once that the whole Russian armament might strike any portion of his line before other portions could come to its aid. His only resource was in flight. The same wind which was bringing down the Russian fleet upon him, would bear him onward in his escape, to take shelter under the massive guns of the batteries and ramparts of Oczakow.

The signal was given for the flight. As in the twinkling of an eye, a wonderful scene of tumult and

confusion was presented along the whole Turkish line. The ships, the frigates, the gun-boats were raising their anchors, cutting their cables, spreading their sails, and pulling their oars, in the frantic endeavor to escape the impending peril. Admiral Jones opened fire upon the bewildered foe, from his bow chasers, wherever a gun could be brought to bear.

The second officer in command of the Turkish fleet seemed to act like one bereft of reason, in the panic which had apparently seized all alike. He had charge of one of the finest of the Turkish line-of-battle ships; a mammoth fabric, with its tiers of death-dealing guns, which would have been a match for any ship in the British navy. But assailed by a dozen Russian ships and gun-boats, it would in a few moments have been sunk beneath the waves, or blown into the air. As the vast sails of this ship were flung to the breeze, it slowly wheeled around, got under rapid headway and ran plump upon a sand-bank, beyond all possible hope of extrication. As she struck, she careened over at an angle of forty-five degrees. The muzzles of her guns, on the lower side, were dipped into the water; upon the upper side, they pointed to the clouds. Thus the ship could neither fight nor run. The crew, as many as could, crowded into the boats, escaped from the ship, and took refuge in other vessels of the fleet.

Admiral Jones knew that the ship was his. It was a magnificent prize. It needed no further attention. He therefore gave chase to the ship of the Capitaine Pasha. The Prince of Nassau, to the great chagrin of Admiral Jones, came up with his gun-boats, threw fire-balls into the splendid prize, and burned it to the water's edge.

The flag-ship of the Turkish admiral was also an unwieldy mass to navigate the intricate channels of this shallow bay. It soon struck a sand-bank, and was helpless. The crew fled. There were now nine of these large Turkish ships-of-war aground. They were manned by Turkish sailors, and also by a large number of Greeks, who had been subjugated by the Turks, and being nominal Christians, were in entire sympathy with their Christian brethren the Russians. These men were compelled to serve the Turkish guns, as England often compelled impressed American seamen.

The Prince of Nassau seemed to have lost all control of his gun-boats. They ran about here and there, independent of all command, and did what they would. Like Indian warriors, each boat fought, plundered, or destroyed, on its own account. A cannon-ball had struck the flag-staff of the deserted admiral's ship, and broke it off so that the flag hung down dragging it in the water. The Prince of Nas

sau, eager of the honor of capturing the flag of the Turkish admiral, hurried up with one of his gun-boats, seized the defenceless banner, and then insanely threw his fire-balls into the ship till it was wrapped in flame and disappeared.

The other boats of the flotilla, imitating this example, rushed about pell-mell without order or plan, offering no coöperation to follow up the victory, and wantonly amusing themselves in burning the grounded ships. All of these Turkish vessels had more or less of the Greeks on board. In vain these poor creatures cried for mercy. They threw themselves upon their knees; they made the sign of the cross, to indicate that they too were Christians. The barbarous and fanatic Russian sailors, ignorant and cruel, threw their fire-balls on board the ships, and consigned vessels and crew alike to the flames. Above three thousand of these unhappy men were burned with their ships. Only two of the stranded vessels were saved from the flames. One was a sloop, very indifferently armed, and the other a small brig.

Though this was a great victory, it probably gave Admiral Jones more pain than pleasure. He was appalled by the frightful, needless carnage, of burning the poor Greeks crying for mercy. Such a mode of carrying on war was abhorrent to his humane

feelings. No results had been accomplished commensurate with what might have been secured, had there been order in the fleet. These nine grounded vessels, with their powerful armaments, would have been of immense advantage, transferred from the line of the Turks to that of the Russians. It is not strange that by this time Admiral Jones lost all patience with his very undesirable coadjutor. Under date of June 20th, he wrote to his Polish friend, Chamberlain Littlepage, as follows :

“Without explaining to me any of his reasons, the Prince of Nassau wished to go to the sand-bank which was under the guns at Oczakow, with all his flotilla. I opposed it, for all the Turkish flotilla was under the cannon of the place, within cannon-shot of our right wing. He permitted himself to say many uncivil things. Among others he said that *he* was always wanted to protect *my* squadron with his flotilla.

“As he had often said such things, I told him that it was improper for him to say this to me, or for me to hear him say it. He boasted that he had taken the two ships. I told him ‘I saw nothing wonderful in that ; for they were both aground and captured before he came up.’ He said ‘he knew better than I did how to take ships.’ I told him that without impugning his skill, he was not ignorant that I

had proved my ability to take ships which were not Turks'. He lost all control of himself, and threatened to write against me to the empress and Prince Potemkin.

"As for that, I told him if he were base enough to do it, I defied his malice. Before this ridiculous dispute, our combination was unnecessary. Otherwise I would have put up with still more for the good of the service. I feel no rancor against him; and though he said, in a bitter tone, that I would be rejoiced to see him beaten, he little understood my heart."

The prince claimed all the honor of this victory. He so boastfully proclaimed his achievements, that Prince Potemkin was disposed to accept his account of the adventure, especially as Admiral Jones had too much self-respect to dispute his statements in a disgraceful squabble for the honor.

Potemkin, elated by this discomfiture of the Turks, brought up his whole land force to the walls of Oczakow, intending to attempt to carry the works by storm. The Turkish gun-boats were riding at anchor, under the protection of the guns of the fortress. The Prince of Nassau was ordered to attack the flotilla with his whole force of gun-boats. The admiral was to assist, as he could, in towing the Russian flotilla to the position it was to take in the con-

rest. The whole plan of the battle was arranged by Potemkin, so that Admiral Jones had but little to do but to obey the orders, which were sent to him, though in some respects he was left to his own discretion.

At one hour after midnight, the flotilla commenced its advance toward the Turkish boats; but hesitatingly, with no indication that they were under the impulse of a guiding and inspiring mind. Some of the most important of the boats were swept by the current to positions where they could accomplish nothing. In the vicinity of the fortress there was deep water. The admiral coöperated with great efficiency in bringing the boats into position. At six o'clock in the morning, he saw five Turkish galleys, protected by the guns of Fort Hassan. He plunged upon them, boarded the first one he came to, seized it as a prize, and with his boats towed it away. He then attacked the next galley, which was a very large one, bearing the flag of the Capitaine Pasha. Before the admiral could arrange his boats, to haul out the prize, a young officer, inexperienced and agitated, cut the cable by which she rode at anchor, and a fresh breeze drove her rapidly toward the fort.

The Turks were now pouring a destructive fire upon their own vessel. The admiral despatched a boat to the Wolodimii to fetch another anchor and

cable. Leaving the galley to be manned with his own sailors, till the boat should return, he pressed forward to other conquests. He writes in his journal:

“ Before the return of Lieutenant Fox, I had the mortification to see fire break out in the galley of the Capitaine Pasha. I at first believed that the slaves chained on board had found means to escape. But afterwards I had positive proof that Brigadier Alexiano, being in a boat at the time with the Prince of Nassau, on the outside of the flotilla, and being aware of the intention of the rear-admiral, swore that it should not succeed, and sent a Greek canoe to set fire to the galley. The three other Turkish galleys were at once run down and burned by fire-balls. There were also a two-masted ship, and a large bomb-vessel burnt near Fort Hassan. This includes all that was taken or destroyed by water, save fifty-two prisoners taken by the rear-admiral, in the two galleys. The wretched beings who were chained in the galley of the Capitaine Pasha, perished there in the flames.

“ The prince marshal having made an important diversion on the land side, it is to be regretted that advantage was not taken of this movement to seize the remainder of the enemy's flotilla; but our flotilla never came up within reach of grape-shot.”



Admiral Jones took the precaution to have the accuracy of this statement confirmed, by five of the leading captains of the Russian ships. The Turkish fleet, being thus again humbled, retreated that very night, both squadron and flotilla, to a strong position at the mouths of the Danube. The admiral remained at his station, to watch the enemy and to be prepared for any emergence. He gives the following account of the proceedings of his two singular coadjutors, the German prince, and the Greek brigadier.

“The moment the ships began to withdraw from Uczakow, the Prince of Nassau and Brigadier Alexiano hurried straight to the headquarters of Prince Potemkin to relate the things which both pretended they had performed. In a few moments after the flotilla began to retire, the rain fell in torrents, of which Nassau and Alexiano received their own share before reaching headquarters.

“Two days afterwards, Alexiano returned on board the Wolodimir, having caught a malignant fever, of which he died on the 8th of July. The Prince of Nassau, who had made use of him in cabaling against me—God knows wherefore—neither visited him in his sickness nor assisted at his funeral. At first it was given out, that the service must sustain the loss of every Greek in it, on account of his death; but I soon experienced the reverse

Not one asked to be dismissed ; they remained under my command with the Russians, and were more contented than before. On the day preceding the death of Alexiano he had received intelligence of having been promoted two grades ; and that her majesty had bestowed on him a fine estate and peasants, in White Russia.

“ At the same time, the Prince of Nassau had received a very valuable estate, with three or four thousand peasants, also in White Russia, and the military Order of St. George, of the second class. Her majesty likewise gave him liberty to hoist the flag of vice-admiral at the taking of Oczakow, to which event it was apparently believed he would greatly contribute.

“ I received the Order of St. Anne, an honor with which I am highly flattered, and with which I could have been perfectly satisfied, had others been recompensed only in the same proportion, and according to the merit of their services.\* All the officers of

\* Upon the reception of the Order of St. Anne by the empress, Count Segur wrote from St. Petersburg a very complimentary letter to the admiral, under date of the 14th of July, 1788. In this letter he says :

“ The empress being absent I forwarded a copy of the greatest part of your letter to General Mouronoff, who had it read to that princess. She is highly satisfied with it, and in two lines from her hand, has been pleased to charge me with assurances to you, of the great respect in which she holds your services. General Mouronoff begs me to say that he will endeavor to merit the obliging things you say of him.”

the flotilla received a step of promotion, and the gratuity of a year's pay. The greater part of them also obtained the Order of St. George of the last class. Only two of these officers had been bred to the sea; none of the others had been engaged in navigation. The officers of the squadron under my command were almost wholly marine officers. They had done their duty well, when opposed to the enemy; but they obtained no promotion, no mark of distinction, no pecuniary gratification. My mortification was excessive; but my officers at this time gave me a very gratifying proof of their attachment. On promising that I would demand justice for them from the Prince Potemkin, at the close of the campaign, they stifled their vexation, and made no complaint."

Three days after this important naval battle, Prince Potemkin came from the headquarters of the army, to visit Admiral Jones on board the flag-ship Wolodimir. The prince was accompanied by quite a brilliant retinue of the highest dignitaries of his military court. They all remained to dine with the admiral in his spacious cabin. The prince was very anxious to promote harmonious action between the admiral and the Prince of Nassau. By his powerful influence he succeeded in inducing the Prince of Nassau to make an apology to the admiral, in the

presence of all around the table. The apology was cordially accepted; and the admiral, knowing the versatile and frivolous character of the prince, hoped that it was sincere.

As Potemkin took his leave, he requested Admiral Jones to do all in his power toward raising the cannon, anchors, and other effects, belonging to the Turkish ships which had been burned. The next day, Admiral Jones, in a spirit of conciliation, made a visit to the Prince of Nassau. He had previously detailed one of the transport ships, which was empty and unemployed, to the work of raising some of the sunken guns. As soon as he stepped on board the gun-boat of the prince, he was disrespectfully assailed, when he expected to have been received with open arms.

“That transport,” exclaimed the Prince of Nassau, angrily, “which you have ventured to employ on your own services, belonged to my flotilla, and you had no right to take it under your command.”

The admiral mildly replied, “Prince Potemkin charged me to engage at once in that important business, as a servant of the empress. As all the vessels of war, and all the transports alike belong to her imperial majesty, and as the transport in question was empty and unemployed, I cannot see that you have any reasonable cause of complaint against me.”

But Nassau fumed and raged. The admiral

ashamed of such puerile quarrelling, sadly took leave of him, begging him to reflect that he had no cause for displeasure. Thus affairs went on, day after day. There were heart-burnings and bickerings, and the admiral found such influences operating against him, that his hands were effectually tied.

At the close of the American war, there were many British officers thrown out of employment, who eagerly entered into the service of the Empress of Russia.

This vast northern empire, with then no access to the ocean but through the Baltic Sea, was not a maritime power. The empress had very few naval officers of any experience. By seizing Constantinople, undoubtedly the finest port in the world, the empress expected that the sails of her ships would whiten all the seas. Eagerly, therefore, she accepted the services of able military men from whatever nation. There were no better naval officers than England could afford. These men with one accord, as we have mentioned, combined, with the most astonishing and persistent malignity, to crush Admiral Jones. The Englishman, W. Tooke, to whom we have before referred, with his bitter British prejudices expresses the sentiments of them one and all. In his *Life of Catherine II.* he writes :

“ This known scarcity of commanders could not

fail to attract the attention of foreign adventurers who had acquired any experience and reputation in maritime affairs. Of this number was the English pirate and renegado, Paul Jones, who had rendered himself so notorious in the American war by the mischiefs he did to the trade of his country, and whose desperate courage, which only served to render his atrociousness conspicuous, would in a good cause have entitled him to honor.

“ This man could not but experience the common fate incident to his character ; and finding he did not meet the consideration which he expected in America, he made a tender of his services to the court of St. Petersburg, where he was gladly received, and immediately appointed to a high command in the grand fleet which was under equipment at Cronstadt.

“ The British officers, full of those national and professional ideas of honor which they had imbibed in their own country and service, considered this appointment as the highest affront that could be offered to them, and a submission to it, an act of such degradation that no time or circumstance could wipe away the dishonor. They accordingly went in a body, to the amount of near thirty, without a single dissident lagging behind, or hesitating on account of inconvenience or personal distress, to lay down their commissions ; declaring at the same time that it was

impossible for them to serve under, or to act in any manner or capacity whatever, with a pirate or renegade."

In the same spirit as the above, the English historians have, from that day to this, written of this noble man.

On the 18th of September, the admiral received a secret order to attack the advance guard of the squadron which was anchored near Beresane. The attack was to be made with five frigates, mounted as batteries, supported by a few other vessels of the squadron, as reserves. The arrangements which were made for arming the frigates for the enterprise were not such as he could approve. For instance twenty-four pound-shot were to be used in guns of thirty-six pounds calibre. To make these balls fill the bore, they were dipped in pitch to enlarge their circumference. This was exceedingly dangerous. If the smallest particle of combustible matter adhered to the gun, it would set fire to the next cartridge. A single such accident would paralyze the energies of the bravest man.

The admiral presented to Potemkin a plan of attack. The Prince Potemkin approved the plan. The Prince of Nassau objected to it. There were delays, and fault-findings; the admiral being ready

to move, either upon his own plan or upon any other whenever the command should be given him.

On the 13th of October, the admiral received an order which wounded him very deeply. It was as follows :

“ As it is seen that the Turkish admiral has a greater number of vessels than yourself, and he may resolve to attempt something before quitting his grand fleet, I must request your excellency to hold yourself in readiness to receive him courageously, and drive him back. I require this to be done without loss of time ; if not, you will be made answerable for every neglect. I have already ordered the flotilla to approach.

“ PRINCE POTESKIN.”

To these unkind words the admiral replied in his journal :

“ It will be hard to believe that Prince Potemkin addressed such words to Paul Jones.”

To the prince he wrote ;

“ I leave to your highness, as you have a noble heart and a magnanimous soul to judge how an officer who fears nothing, and had nothing wherewith to reproach himself, must have been affected by your order, of the 13th. I was directed ‘ to keep



myself in readiness to receive the enemy *courageously, and that without loss of time, for if not, etc.'*

"I was in despair having been all heart and soul for the good of the service ; and having done all that a man of honor could to inspire a confidence which I believed I had deserved at your hands, allow me, my prince, to ask you how it happens that I have been so unhappy as to have lost your regard. My enemies themselves cannot refuse me their respect. General Count de Mamonow assured me of your confidence in me, giving me the most flattering hope of your friendship, and her imperial majesty told me the most obliging things to the same effect. At all events, your highness has so good a heart that you will excuse the hastiness of expression which escaped me in my letter on the 14th.

"I am anxious to continue in the service. It is unnecessary to recite either the promises or the offers which have been made to me. I am disposed to do all that can be asked of a man of honor, in my situation. And if you find in me an acquisition to the imperial marine, it belongs to yourself to fix me in Russia. But as I come neither as an adventurer, nor a charlatan to repair a broken fortune, I hope in future to experience no humiliation, and soon to find myself in a situation which was promised to me when I was invited to enter into the marine of the

empress. Perhaps I love honors too much. But as to fortune, though my own is not very great, I never bent the knee to that idol. I well know that riches do not insure happiness. I am sure of one thing, if I had the happiness of once enjoying your confidence, it would be for life, for I am not of a character that can change."

Prince Potemkin had gradually come to the conclusion that it was best to remove both Admiral Jones from the command of the squadron and the Prince of Nassau, and to place both squadron and flotilla under the command of the Russian admiral, Mordwinoff. On the 9th of October, the Prince of Nassau was deprived of his command, and left the shores of the Euxine for Warsaw in Poland. Nine days after, on the 18th of October, Admiral Jones received the following order from Prince Potemkin.

"According to the special desire of her imperial majesty, your service is fixed in the northern seas. And as this squadron and the flotilla are placed by me under the orders of Admiral Count Mordwinoff your excellency may in consequence proceed on the voyage directed."

This was unquestionably a severe blow to Admiral Jones. He had hoped to accomplish great results in the campaign of the Euxine. And now he was ordered to the shores of the Baltic, more than

a thousand miles distant, to serve her majesty in some manner as yet undefined. Russia was at that time at war with Sweden. But in those high latitudes and ice-bound waters, there was but little opportunity in midwinter for naval warfare.

On the 20th, the admiral replied to the unexpected order he had received, in the following note to Potemkin :

“I am much flattered that her majesty yet deigns to interest herself about me. But what I shall forever regret is the loss of your regard. I will not say that it is difficult to find more skilful sea officers than myself. I know well that it is a very possible thing. But I feel emboldened to say that you will never find a man more susceptible of a faithful attachment, or more zealous in the discharge of his duty. I forgive my enemies who are near you for the painful blow aimed at me. But if there is a just God, it will be difficult for him to do as much.”

This intimation that Potemkin had been led to this action by the persuasions of others, annoyed the imperial prince, who considered himself rather the master than the servant even of her majesty. When, a few days after, the admiral called at headquarters, to take leave of the prince, Potemkin said to him, with much vehemence, at the same time rising from his chair and stamping with his foot :

“Do not believe that any one leads me, not **even** the empress.” The prince, however, presented the following letter to the admiral, to be presented to the empress in testimonial of his services.

“MADAM—In sending to the high throne of your imperial majesty Rear-Admiral M. Paul Jones, I take with submission the liberty of certifying the eagerness and zeal which he has ever shown for the service of your imperial majesty, and to render himself worthy of the high favor of your imperial majesty.

“From the most faithful subject of your imperial majesty,

“PRINCE POTESKIN.”

• Oct. 31, 1788. •

## CHAPTER XVI.

### *Retirement and Death.*

**The Return to Cherson.—Sickness and Sadness.—Oczakow Stormed.—The Wintry Journey to St. Petersburg.—Mental Activity.—Calumniated by the English.—The Admiral's Defence.—Slandorous Accusation.—His Entire Acquittal.—Testimony of Count Segur.—Letter to the Empress.—Obtains Leave of Absence.—Returns to France.—Life in Paris.—Sickness and Death.**

ON a cold bleak morning of the 9th of November Admiral Jones, with a disappointed and saddened spirit, stepped from the deck of his flag-ship, the *Wolowimир*, into an open boat which had been launched at its side. A freezing blast tossed and crested the waters of the widely expanded sea, while his own ships rolling heavily on the billows, and the masts of the Turkish squadron could be seen rocking to and fro, far away in the distance. In this open boat, exposed to the wintry gales, encountering sleet and snow, and drenched with spray, the war-worn, world-weary admiral spent three days and three nights, before he reached Cherson. His sufferings, from the combined influence of hostile elements and an agitated mind, were very great.

The day after his arrival, an impassable barrier of ice extended as far as the eye could reach. Completely worn out, he sank upon his bed, and it was long doubtful whether he would ever leave it till he was borne to his burial. Slowly he recovered. Nearly a month passed away, of winter's most dismal storms in that dreary region, ere he was able to set out on his long journey of more than two thousand miles, across the whole breadth of Russia.

He left Cherson on the morning of the 6th of December, 1788. The mercury was then at twenty-six degrees below zero. That very morning, as he soon afterwards learned, the Russians took Oczakow by storm. Eleven thousand soldiers composed the Turkish garrison. In the intensity of the cold, just before the dawn of day, the Russians, in six strong columns, with loud yells, a storm of bullets, and gleaming sabres, rushed upon the Turks, taking them completely by surprise. It was an awful scene of demoniac clamor, blood, and woe. In a few hours the dreadful deed was done. Not one in the garrison, not a Turk in the city, was spared. Nineteen thousand gory corpses, frozen in the wintry blast, strewed the streets of the city. Had the Turks been victorious, the Russians would have been put to the sword with equal ferocity. Such is man in his treat-

ment of his brother. Such, in the main, has been the history of our race since the Fall.

In the swiftly drawn sledges of Russia, Admiral Jones was whirled along over the drear and treeless plains at the rate of over one hundred miles a day. At Skloff, he made a short tarry, where he was received by General Soritsch, with the most distinguished attention. He reached St. Petersburg on the 28th of the month, after a journey of twenty-two days. The empress invited him to the honor of a private audience on the 31st. He presented the letter from Prince Potemkin. The empress received him kindly. He was informed that a little time must elapse, before it could be decided what new command should be intrusted to him. He was however assured that it should be one certainly of not less importance than that of a squadron in the Black Sea.

The mind of the admiral was always in intense activity. The one thought which seemed ever to engross him ever the promotion of the prosperity of the United States. During the few weeks of repose which were thus forced upon him, he drew up a very carefully prepared plan, of an alliance, political and commercial, between Russia and the United States. The object of this plan was to promote reciprocal advantages, and especially to encourage

commerce with the growing Russian settlements on the Black Sea. This document he presented to the Russian vice-chancellor, Count d'Osterman. The count, after carefully examining it, invited the admiral to his cabinet, and said to him :

“ The plan is a good one, but I do not think it expedient to adopt it at this time. A commercial alliance between Russia and the United States would still futher irritate the British government against Russia. We must postpone the further consideration of this question until we have made peace with the Turks.”

England, in her desire to engross the commerce of the world, wished to cripple that of all other nations, especially that of the United States. The admiral, in his journal, speaks as follows of the efforts of the English to crush him :

“ I have been more deeply hurt by those secret machinations against me as regards the empress. My enemies have had the wickedness to make her believe that I was a cruel and brutal man, and that I had, during the American war, even killed my own nephew. It is well known that, from motives of revenge, the English have invented and propagated a thousand fictions and atrocities, to endeavor to blacken the character of the celebrated men who effected the American Revolution. A Washington



**and** a Franklin, two of the most illustrious and virtuous men that have ever adorned humanity, have not been spared by these calumniators. Are they now the less respected by their fellow-citizens? On the contrary they are universally revered, even in Europe, as the fathers of their country, and as examples of all that is great and noble in human character.

“ In civil war, it is not wonderful that opposite factions should mutually endeavor to make it believed that each is in the right. And it is obvious, that the party most in the wrong will always be the most calumnious. If there had really been anything against my character, the English would not have failed to furnish convincing proofs of it ; for with very slender means, I had been able to give more alarm to their three kingdoms, during the war, than any other individual had done. As an officer, I loved good discipline, which I consider indispensable to the success of operations, particularly at sea, where men are so much crowded, and brought into such close contact. In the English navy, it is known that captains of ships are often tyrants who order the lash for the poor seamen very frequently, and sometimes for nothing. In the American navy we have almost the same regulations. But I looked on my crew as my children, and I have always found means to manage them without flogging. I never

had a nephew nor any other relation under my command. I have one dear nephew, who is still too young for service, but who now pursues his studies." Since I came to Russia, I have intended him for the imperial marine. Instead of imbruing my hands in his blood, he will be cherished as my son.

"In short, my conduct has obtained for me the returns most grateful to my heart. I have had the happiness to give universal satisfaction to two great and enlightened nations which I have served. Of this I have received singular proofs. I am the only man in the world that possesses a sword given by the King of France. It is to me a glorious distinction to wear it. I have indelible proofs of the high consideration of the United States. But what completes my happiness is the esteem and friendship of the most virtuous men, whose fame will be immortal; and that a Washington, a D'Estaing, a Lafayette, think the bust of Paul Jones worthy of being placed side by side with their own."

Malignantly as the admiral was pursued, being far away in a strange land, and removed from the protection of his personal friends, it seemed absolutely necessary that he should speak in his own defence. Even his great namesake, the illustrious

\* Mr. William Taylor, merchant, of New York, son of the admiral's eldest sister Mrs. Taylor of Dumfries, Scotland.

Apostle Paul, found himself so situated as to deem it needful commend himself. At this time the most infamous conspiracy was got up, as the admiral and Coun' Segur both affirm, by the English officers in the navy and the English merchants in St. Petersburg. It was intended utterly to ruin the man whom they had so unscrupulously assailed. Biographical fidelity renders it necessary that this story should be told, notwithstanding the nature of its details. The admiral promptly wrote to his friend, Prince Potemkin, informing him of the cruel slander. His letter sounds like a wail of grief. It was dated St. Petersburg, April 13, 1789.

“MY LORD—Having had the advantage to serve under your orders, and in your sight, I remember with particular satisfaction the kind promises and testimonies of your friendship, with which you have honored me. As I have served all my life for honor, I had no other motive for accepting the flattering invitation of her imperial majesty than a laudable ambition to distinguish myself in the service of a sovereign so magnanimous and illustrious; for I never yet have bent the knee to self-interest, nor drawn my sword for hire.

“A few days ago I thought myself one of the happiest men in the empire. Your highness had

renewed to me your promise of friendship, and the empress had assigned me a command of a nature to occupy the most active and enterprising genius.

“A bad woman has accused me of violating her daughter. If she had told the truth, I should have candor enough to own it, and would trust my honor, which is a thousand times dearer to me than my life, to the mercy of the empress. I declare, with the assurance becoming a military character, that I am innocent. Till that unhappy moment, I have enjoyed the public esteem and the affection of all who knew me. Shall it be said that, in Russia, a wretched woman who *eloped* from her *husband* and *family* in the country, *stole away her daughter*, lives here in a house of ill-fame, and leads a debauched and adulterous life, has found credit enough on a simple complaint, unsupported *by any* proof, to affect the honor of a general officer of reputation, who has merited and received the decorations of America, of France, and of this empire?

“If I had been favored with the least intimation of a complaint of that nature having found its way to the sovereign, I know too well what belongs to delicacy, to have presented myself in the presence of the empress before my justification.

“I thought that in every country, a man accused **had** a right to employ advocates, and to avail him-

self of his friends for his justification. Judge, my prince, of my astonishment and distress of mind, when I yesterday was informed that the day before, the governor of the city had sent for my advocate, and forbidden *him*, at his peril, or *any other person*, to meddle with *my cause*.

“I am innocent before God! and my conscience knows no reproach. The complaint brought against me is an infamous lie, and there is no circumstance that gives it even an air of probability.

“I address myself to you with confidence, my prince, and am assured that the friendship you have to kindly promised me, will be immediately exerted in my favor; and that you will not suffer the illustrious sovereign of this great empire to be misled by the false insinuations and secret cabals of my hidden enemies. Your mind will find more true pleasure in pleading the cause of an innocent man whom you honor with your friendship, than can result from other victories equally glorious with that of Oczakow, which will always rank among the most brilliant of military achievements. If your highness will condescend to question Monsieur Crimpin,\* (for he dare not now *even speak to me*), he can tell you many circumstances which will elucidate my innocence. I

\* Monsieur Crimpin was the advocate whom he had first engaged

am, with profound respect, my lord, your highness's devoted and most obedient servant," etc., etc.

The proof of the admiral's innocence of this atrocious charge was soon made out beyond all possibility of question. Count de Segur, the long-tried and disinterested friend, wrote an account of the affair. This document, which was perfectly conclusive, was published in all the leading papers of Europe, for the abominable slander had been spread far and wide. Justice to the memory of the admiral demands that this document should be given with but slight abridgment.

"The American rear-admiral was favorably welcomed at court; often invited to dinner by the empress, and received with distinction into the best society in the city. On a sudden, Catherine commanded him to appear no more in her presence. He was informed that he was accused of an infamous crime; of assaulting a young girl of fourteen, and of grossly violating her. It was said that probably he would be tried by the Courts of Admiralty, in which there were many English officers who were strongly prejudiced against him.

"As soon as this order was known, every one abandoned the unhappy American. No one spoke to him. People avoided saluting him, and every

door was shut against him. All those by whom but yesterday he had been eagerly welcomed, now fled from him as if he had been inflicted by a plague. No advocate would take charge of his cause, and at last even his servants would not continue in his service. And Paul Jones, whose exploits every one had so recently been so ready to proclaim, and whose friendship had been sought after, found himself alone, in the midst of an immense population. Petersburg, a great capital, became to him a desert. He was moved even to tears at my visit.

“ ‘I was unwilling,’ he said to me, shaking me by the hand, ‘to knock at your door, and to expose myself to a fresh affront, which would have been more cutting than all the rest. I have braved death a thousand times, now I wish for it.’

“ His appearance, his arms being laid upon the table, made me suspect some desperate intention. I said to him :

“ ‘Resume your composure and your courage. Do you not know that human life, like the sea, has its storms, and that fortune is even more capricious than the winds? If, as I hope, you are innocent, brave this sudden tempest. If unhappily you are guilty, confess it to me with unreserved frankness, and I will do everything I can to snatch you by a sudden flight from the danger which threatens you.’

“He replied, ‘I am ready to take my most solemn oath, and upon my honor, that I am innocent, and a victim of the most infamous calumny. This is the truth. Some days ago a young girl came to me in the morning to ask me if I could give her some linen or lace to mend. She then indulged in some rather earnest and indecent allurements. Astonished at so much boldness in one of such few years, I felt compassion for her. I advised her not to enter upon so vile a career, gave her some money, and dismissed her. But she was determined to remain. Impatient at this resistance, I took her by the hand and led her to the door. But at the instant when the door was opened, the little profligate tore her sleeves and neckerchief, raised great cries, complained that I had assaulted her, and threw herself into the arms of an old woman whom she called her mother, and who certainly was not brought there by chance.’

“‘Very well,’ said I, ‘but cannot you learn the names of these adventurers?’

“‘The porter knows them,’ he replied. ‘Here are their names written down, but I do not know where they live. I was desirous of immediately presenting a memorial about this ridiculous affair, first to the minister and then to the empress. But I have been interdicted from access to both of them



“‘Give me the paper,’ I said. ‘Resume your accustomed firmness. Be comforted. In a short time we shall meet again.’”

The count returned home, and by the aid of some efficient agents soon unravelled the whole affair. It was proved, by evidence which no one could question, that the woman, Sophie Koltzwarthen, was one of the most infamous creatures, who had been long employed in carrying on a traffic in young girls, whom she passed off as her daughters. The count, having obtained all the necessary documents and attestations, hastened to show it to Paul Jones. Exultingly he said to him, “You have nothing to fear. The wretches are unmasked. All that you need now do, is to send these proofs to the empress. She has directed, under very heavy penalties, that no one shall detain on the way any letters which may be addressed to her personally, and which may be sent to her by post.”

The admiral immediately wrote a letter to her majesty, under date of St. Petersburg, May 17, 1789. After briefly recapitulating the circumstances under which he had been induced to enter into the service of the empress, the incidents in his campaign to the Black Sea, and his recall to the Baltic, he added :

“Such was my situation, when, upon the mere

accusation of a crime, the very idea of which wounds my delicacy, I have found myself driven from court, deprived of the good opinion of your majesty, and forced to employ the time which I wished to devote to the defence of your empire, in cleansing from myself the stains with which calumny had covered me. Condescend to believe, madame, that if I had received the slightest hint that a complaint of such a nature had been made against me, and still more that it had come to your majesty's knowledge, I know too well what is owing to delicacy to have ventured to have appeared before you till I was completely exculpated.

“Understanding neither the laws, the language, nor the forms of justice of this country, I needed an advocate and obtained one. But whether from terror or intimidation he stopped short all at once, and durst not undertake my defence, though convinced of the justice of my cause. But truth may always venture to show itself alone and unsupported at the throne of your majesty. I have not hesitated to labor unaided for my own vindication. I have collected proofs. And if such details might appear under the eye of your majesty I would present them. But if your majesty will deign to order some person to examine them, it will be seen, by the report which will be made, that my crime is a fiction, in-

vented by the cupidity of a wretched woman, whose malice has been countenanced, perhaps incited, by the malice of my numerous enemies. Her husband has himself certified and attested to her infamous conduct. His signature is in my hands, and the pastor Braun, of the district, has assured me that if the College of Justice will give him an order to this effect, he will obtain an attestation from the country people that the mother of the girl referred to is known among them as a wretch utterly unworthy of belief.

“Take a soldier’s word, madame. Believe an officer whom two great nations esteem, and who has been honored with flattering marks of their approbation of which your majesty will soon receive a direct proof from the United States.\* I am innocent, and if I were guilty I would not hesitate to make a candid avowal of my fault, and to commit my honor, which is a thousand times dearer to me than life, to the hands of your majesty.”

The admiral closed this letter with expressions of devotion to the service of the empress. He assured her of his readiness to serve her in any way in his power, but added “that if for any reason he could not be employed again during the campaign, he might be permitted to return to France or America.”

The empress received this letter, examined the

\* He refers to the gold medal ordered to be struck by Congress

documents, and became fully convinced of his innocence. She inveighed bitterly against the authors of the calumny, recalled Paul Jones to court, and received him with even more than her usual kindness. But the admiral, having received blow after blow and finding no employment immediately before him, became weary of the country where he had endured so many humiliations. He consequently requested permission to retire. His request was granted. The empress admitted him to an audience of leave, wished him a pleasant voyage, and he left Russia forever. He bore with him letters of high commendation from the most distinguished men in the capital of Russia. He directed his steps first to Warsaw. Here he was received with the highest consideration by the titular king and his court. He spent two months in Warsaw, hospitably entertained by the nobility, and intensely occupied in preparing for the Empress of Russia a journal of his services, from the time he entered the navy of the United States to the campaign of the Black Sea. In a letter to the empress, which accompanied this document, he wrote, under date of Warsaw, Sept. 25, O. S. 1789.

"I owe it to my reputation and to truth to accompany this journal with an abridgment of the campaign of the Liman.\* If you will deign, madame

\* It was near the mouth of the river Liman that all these naval battles were fought.

to read it with some attention, you will observe how little I have deserved the mortifications which I have endured, and which the justice and goodness of your majesty can alone make me forget. As I never offended, in word or speech or thought, against the laws or usages of the strictest delicacy, it would assuredly be most desirable for me to have the happiness of regaining, in spite of the malice of my enemies, the precious esteem of your majesty."

At Warsaw, the admiral made the acquaintance of, and became the intimate friend of Kosciusko. On the second of November he left Warsaw for Vienna. Here again he was kindly received by those in the highest ranks of society. But in consequence of the sickness of the emperor, he was not favored with an audience. From Warsaw he proceeded to Amsterdam. Kosciusko was at that time deeply engaged in the disastrous conspiracy to liberate Poland from the thraldom of Russia. Sweden was also at war with Russia. There can be no doubt that great efforts were made to enlist the wonderful energies of the admiral, in favor of the two belligerents, against the empress. These efforts were necessarily secret. It is but a glimpse we can get of them. We simply know that the admiral declined all such proffers. From Amsterdam he wrote, under date of December, 1789, to his firm

friend President Washington. In that letter he writes :

“Count Segur and myself have frequently conversed on subjects that regard America. And the most pleasing reflection of all has been the happy establishment of the new constitution, and that you are so deservedly placed at the head of the government, by the unanimous voice of America. Your name alone, sir, has established in Europe a confidence that was for some time before entirely wanting in American concerns ; and I am assured that the happy efforts of your administration are still more sensibly felt throughout the United States. This is more glorious for you than all the laurels that your sword so nobly won in support of the rights of human nature. In war your fame is immortal, as the hero of liberty. In peace you are her patron, and the firmest supporter of her rights. Your greatest admirers and even your best friends have now but one wish left them—that you may long enjoy health and your present happiness.”

From Amsterdam he went to Hamburg by way of Copenhagen. Toward the close of April, 1790, he crossed the channel to London. “Upon landing,” he writes, “I escaped being murdered.” After a short visit there he went to Paris. His health was feeble Still he kept up an active correspond-

ence with his numerous distinguished friends all over the continent. His mode of expressing himself, as the reader will have perceived, was peculiar. He was a man of singular frankness and transparency of character. He gave free utterance to his thoughts as they arose. In Paris he again enjoyed the friendship of Lafayette. Nothing special occurred during his residence in Paris.

Early in June, his health began more rapidly to fail. He lost his appetite, and a dropsical affection swelled his legs and expanded his chest. His physician at length warned him that his symptoms were alarming, and advised him to settle his worldly affairs. He sat in his chair as he dictated to the notary his will. After his friends had retired he rose from his chair, went into his bedroom, and probably feeling a little faint threw himself with his face upon his bed, and his feet resting upon the floor. Soon after, the queen's physician arrived to visit the illustrious patient. He was conducted into the bedroom, where the admiral was found dead. His disorder had terminated in dropsy of the breast.

It was the evening of the 20th of July, 1789. The admiral had reached the age of but forty-five years. His funeral attracted a large concourse of the most distinguished of the residents in Paris.

The National Assembly, then in session passed the following resolve :

“The National Assembly, desirous of honoring the memory of Paul Jones, Admiral of the United States of America, and to preserve by a memorable example, the equality of religious rights, decrees that twelve of its members shall assist at the funeral solemnities of a man who has so well served the cause of liberty.”

A funeral sermon was preached by M. Marson, a French Protestant clergyman. In this oration he said :

“We have just returned to the earth the remains of an illustrious stranger ; one of the first champions of the liberty of America, of that liberty which so gloriously ushered in our own. And what more flattering homage can we offer the memory of Paul Jones than to swear on his tomb to live or to die free. Let neither tyrants nor their satellites ever pollute this sacred earth. May the ashes of the great man, too soon lost to humanity, enjoy here an undisturbed repose. May his example teach posterity the efforts which noble souls are capable of making when stimulated by hatred to oppression. Identify yourself with the glory of Paul Jones, in imitating his contempt of danger, his devotion to his country, and the noble heroism which, after having astonished the



present age, will continue to call forth the veneration of ages yet to come."

Such was the career of this remarkable man. Such is a faithful record of what he said and wrote and did. And this record surely exhibits the character of a worthy and a noble man. He rose to distinction by his own energies. His achievements gave him world-wide renown. His character secured for him not only a cordial welcome in the palaces of kings and in the castles of nobles, but, that which is far higher praise, won for him the esteem and affection of Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, Morris, Lafayette, Count Segur, Count d'Estaing, and a host of others of the worthiest spirits in America and France.

The following is a brief recapitulation of the services which, during his short life, he rendered his country. During the Revolution he fought twenty-three battles at sea, and was never vanquished. He made seven victorious descents upon Great Britain and her colonies. He captured two ships of equal size with his own, and two of far superior force; besides taking many store-ships and other smaller craft. He spread alarm throughout the whole island of Great Britain, compelling the government to fortify all her ports. He also forced the British to desist from their atrocious system of pillaging and

burning in America, and to exchange, as prisoners of war, the Americans whom they had captured and plunged into prison dungeons as "traitors, pirates, and felons."

The distinguished Matthew Carey of Philadelphia, after examining the voluminous correspondence of Paul Jones, contained in the valuable biography compiled by Colonel John Henry Sherburne, wrote to the author:

"I have read, with intense interest, your Life of John Paul Jones. And it must be regarded as a valuable national object, placing, as it does, in strong relief, the shining qualities of this hero, not only as a naval commander **but as a** profound politician. The latter quality appears clearly and distinctly in various parts of the correspondence, wherein are developed views of the proper policy of this country which are worthy of the first statesmen that sat in the Congress of 1774 and 1775—men never exceeded in the annals of the world for sagacity, patriotism and public spirit.

"No man has been the subject of more gross and shocking abuse, and none of those who have distinguished themselves in the Revolution were so little known as he has been to the nation to whose service he devoted all the energies of his magnanimous soul. I confess that for one I always regarded Paul Jones

**as** very few degrees above a *freebooter* who, in the prospect of plunder was reckless of his life. I am now thoroughly undeceived, and consider him **as** deserving a conspicuous rank among the most illustrious of those heroes and statesmen who not only formed a wreath around the brow of this country, but secured her a prouder destiny than ever fell to the lot of any other portion of mankind."

**THE END.**

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